DYNAMIC CRITERIA MAPPING: A STUDY OF THE RHETORICAL VALUES OF PLACEMENT EVALUATORS

Eric Wesley Stalions

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate College of Bowling Green State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

August 2007

Committee:

Richard C. Gebhardt, Advisor

Neal G. Jesse
Graduate Faculty Representative

Kristine L. Blair

Sue C. Wood
ABSTRACT

Richard C. Gebhardt, Advisor

Adapting Bob Broad’s Dynamic Criteria Mapping (DCM) research model, the most current qualitative and quantitative model for researching exit assessment practices, this dissertation study identified, analyzed, and mapped the rhetorical values or criteria that guided placement program evaluators at an Ohio university in placing students into one of the first-year writing courses in 2006. Because DCM had not been applied in a placement assessment institutional context, the purpose of this dissertation was to bring the benefits of DCM to bear on the programmatic assessment of placement practices. This dissertation validated the assumption that DCM can be used to study and understand placement assessment practices, and it employed DCM to provide a focused constructivist content validation argument to improve the placement program’s communal writing assessment practices—rhetorical, deliberative, collaborative assessments—as well as to reflect more accurately the writing program’s curricular criteria. Regarding the primary focus of the dissertation, the study of the rhetorical criteria of the 2006 placement program evaluators, this study used grounded theory methodology, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, QSR International NVivo 7 qualitative coding software, quantitative analyses, and Broad’s Dynamic Criteria Mapping procedures to classify, analyze, and map the evaluators’ rhetorical criteria, to define the correlation between evaluators’ criteria and the writing program’s principal and secondary curricular criteria, and to present a focused validation argument—four validation-argument questions for the placement program to consider—intended to strengthen the relationship between the placement program’s communal writing assessment
practices and the writing program’s curriculum. Derived from the research study’s results, these four validation-argument questions highlighted conclusions for discussion—evaluative issues which the placement program’s administrators should consider to strengthen the placement program’s constructivist content validity. These questions asked administrators to encourage placement readers to use evaluative criteria clearly connected to the curriculum, consistently applied over time, appropriately used with respect to context, and properly utilized to assess the use of narrative. Finally, this dissertation adapted Broad’s streamlined DCM techniques, a more focused and efficient form of DCM, to provide a general heuristic for writing program administrators to investigate the evaluative criteria of their placement programs’ rhetorical assessment practices.
Dynamic Criteria Mapping does for writing assessment what the technology of writing did several thousand years ago for human thought and language: captures it, sets it down on paper, makes it into a concrete object that can be reflected on, interpreted, shared, discussed, negotiated, and revised.

Bob Broad, *What We Really Value*, 2003, p. 137
DEDICATION

For my best friend and wife Annette M. Stalions and our children Caroline, Eric, and Philip

In memory of my mother Connie J. Stalions and mother-in-law Caroline N. Wendling
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I must first thank my family and friends for their support. Thanks to Annette, my best friend and wife, for providing moral support and for caring for our three young children, Caroline, Philip, and Eric, while I wrote my dissertation. Thanks to Robin Murphy and Mwangi Chege, my classmates, colleagues, and comrades in the doctoral program. Thanks also to Joe T. Rowe, a good friend since my freshman year of college.

Thanks to my advisor and mentor Richard Gebhardt, who patiently guided me through the preliminary exam and dissertation processes. I was also fortunate to have a supportive and efficient committee in Kristine Blair, Sue Wood, and Neal Jesse.

Thanks to everyone who made my dissertation study possible: Donna Nelson-Beene, Barbara Gebhardt, Joseph Decker, Susan Harrington, Kelly Jennings, Carol O’Shea, Lee Nickoson-Massey, Lance Massey, Richard Rowlands, Mary Ann Sweeney, and all of my research participants.

Finally, thanks to Bob Broad for providing me with advice and support and for helping me grow as an assessment scholar.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER I. OVERVIEW OF THE DISSERTATION</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER II. THEORETICAL RATIONALE FOR THE DCM RESEARCH MODEL</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of Research</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paradigm Shift from Objectivist to Constructivist Exit Assessment Models</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Constructivist, Exit Assessment Theory and Policy Statements</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory of Complementarity and Communal Writing Assessment Pedagogy</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicability of Exit Assessment Theory to Placement Assessment Theory</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused Constructivist Content Validity Inquiry and Validation Argument</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The First Three Generations of DCM Applications</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER III. OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting of the Study</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-Observer Ethnographer</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Overview of GSW’s Exit and Placement Assessment Practices</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER ONE: OVERVIEW OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation study, an application of Bob Broad’s (2003) Dynamic Criteria Mapping (DCM) research model, has grown out of 20 years of evolving research perspectives of scholars who now recognize the necessity for establishing rhetorical, locally-contextualized, exit assessment research models based upon social constructivist principles. The DCM research model identifies, defines, and maps the rhetorical values that educators articulate during acts of assessment. Adapting Broad’s DCM research model, this study identified, analyzed, and mapped the rhetorical values or criteria that guided placement evaluators in the General Studies Writing (GSW) Program--an independent first-year writing program at Bowling Green State University (BGSU), in Bowling Green, Ohio--in placing students into one of the first-year writing courses in 2006, and the study provided a focused validation argument to strengthen the constructivist content validity of the GSW’s Placement Program. The dissertation’s principal claim, then, is that Broad’s DCM research model can be adapted to provide a focused validation argument to strengthen the Placement Program’s constructivist content validity, which is the relationship between the Placement Program’s communal writing assessment (CWA) practices--collaborative decision-making assessment procedures--and the writing program’s curriculum.

Since 2005, writing assessment scholars have been employing the DCM research model. For instance, Susanmarie Harrington and Scott Weeden; Barry Alford; Joel Haefner; Jane Detweiler, Maureen McBride, and Douglas Walls; and Linda Adler-Kassner and Heidi Estrem presented their DCM research findings at both the 2006 and 2007 Conference on College Composition and Communication. Significantly, those recent adapters of Broad’s approach have all been using DCM specifically for the programmatic evaluation and implementation of exit and outcomes-based assessment measures. DCM, however, has been noticeably absent from
placement assessment scholarship. Because DCM has not yet been employed in a placement assessment context, the purpose of this dissertation study is to bring the benefits of DCM to bear on the programmatic assessment of placement practices. In fact, this study argues that DCM may be employed theoretically at any institution that utilizes placement evaluators situated in a communal, social constructivist, locally-contextualized, rhetorical placement model.

Broad developed DCM, the most current qualitative and quantitative model for researching exit assessment practices, out of three research studies (1997, 2000, 2003) that identified, analyzed, and articulated the rhetorical values of administrators and instructors involved in portfolio assessment. Broad’s studies focused on the evaluative deliberations of instructors in groups of three; these instructors met in the middle of the term for a norming session to evaluate individual portfolio samples, and they gathered at the end of the term for another norming session to evaluate complete, sample portfolios. These trios of instructors gave actual passing or failing grades to students’ portfolios at the end of the term (1997, pp. 137-139; 2000, pp. 219-222; 2003, pp. 18-23).

In all three studies, Broad’s research site was “City University,” his pseudonym for a large, Midwestern, public university, in which instructors collaboratively passed or failed students’ exit portfolios (1997, pp. 134; 2000, pp. 217-219; 2003, pp. 16-18). In “Reciprocal Authorities in Communal Writing Assessment: Constructing Textual Value within a ‘New Politics of Inquiry,’” Broad (1997) examined the administrators’ and teachers’ political values with respect to their “evaluative authority” in assessing portfolios (p. 137). Whereas administrators relied upon norming sessions to exert influence, instructors relied upon the personal knowledge of their own students’ essays and “cold,” “text-only” readings of students’ essays not enrolled in their classes to influence evaluative judgments in their “trios” (pp. 163-
In “Pulling Your Hair Out: Crises of Standardization in Communal Writing Assessment,” Broad (2000) focused on how instructors struggled to standardize or arrive at a consensus on rhetorical criteria (p. 213). He described how instructors adapted to “dissent” and “consensus” in the process of “articulation,” a process in which instructors “articulate” rhetorical “judgments” while evaluating essays (pp. 252-255). Finally, in What We Really Value: Beyond Rubrics in Teaching and Assessing Writing, Broad (2003) presented a new method for “discovering, negotiating, and publicizing what we really value in students’ writing”—“Dynamic Criteria Mapping” (p. 5). Heeding Huot’s (2002) call for a “new theory and practice of writing assessment” that emphasizes “site-based,” “locally-contextualized,” “context sensitive,” “rhetorically-based,” “accessible” assessment measures (p. 105), Broad built his qualitative and quantitative DCM research model upon social constructivist, grounded, and hermeneutic theories.

Research models like DCM are necessary because current social constructivist assessment models, which emphasize context and reflect actual teaching, learning, and institutional values, require justification through validity inquiry research. In recent years, a paradigm shift has occurred from scientifically constructed assessment models which demand assessment procedures to rhetorical assessment models which require research methods. Huot (2002) explained that writing assessment researchers have focused historically on a “technocentric” approach, a psychometric “arhetorical” assessment endeavor that emphasized assessment “procedures” and “scores” (pp. 83-84, 96, 141-144). Edward M. White (1996), however, argued that assessment must be conceived as “research”: “An assessment is a means of gathering information to answer questions” (p. 106). Similarly, Huot and Ellen Schendel (2002) argued for assessment as “research”—“research” that addressed a “question,” included a
“methodology,” and produced “results” (p. 210). Such research inquiries examine the impact of assessment models on teaching, learning, and the “stakeholders” involved in assessment (p. 209). With respect to assessing writing programs, Huot and Schendel provided a “methodology” for researching and documenting the quality of assessment programs (p. 207). More specifically, they proposed a “meta-assessment” of assessment programs or a “validity inquiry”: “Validity inquiries examine the consequences of assessment on the various stakeholders involved, [and] they address how writing impacts teaching and learning and students’ perceptions of themselves as writers” (p. 209). A “validity inquiry” assumes that assessment is “research,” includes a methodology, and answers a “research question” (p. 210).

When conducting a “validity inquiry,” Huot and Schendel insisted that administrators must establish an argument for using a particular kind of writing assessment model and justify the use of that assessment model. Administrators must collect information from teachers to determine how effectively a writing program places students into suitable first-year writing courses (p. 223). They explained that a “validity inquiry” involves “building an argument using multiple sources of evidence to demonstrate that the results of assessment improve teaching and learning” (p. 16). Assessment scholars have called such an argument a “validation argument.”

Drawing from the works of Lee J. Cronbach, Samuel Messick, and the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing, Peggy O’Neill (2006) explained that “validation arguments are rhetorical constructs that draw from all available means of support.” O’Neill, Schendel, and Huot (2002) argued that when research is treated as “inquiry,” more faculty members will be able to engage in assessment activities, “multiple methods of assessment” will be available, “standardized” assessments will lose value, and assessments will become
collaborative (p. 17). In other words, assessment should be a “communal,” “collaborative” endeavor (Huot & Schendel, p. 213).

Answering Huot, Schendel, and O’Neill’s call for employing validity inquiries to substantiate communal assessment practices and decisions, this dissertation study adapts the DCM research model to validate the principal claim: Broad’s (2003) DCM research model can be adapted to provide a focused validation argument to strengthen the Placement Program’s constructivist content validity. Each chapter, consequently, substantiates the claim that DCM can be used to study and understand placement assessment practices, and consequently, to improve placement procedures to better reflect curricular criteria and goals.

“Chapter Two: Theoretical Rationale for the DCM Research Model” justifies this claim with a comprehensive review of research in exit and placement assessment: This chapter’s “Review of Research,” pp. 10-50, establishes the currency of the DCM research model in exit assessment theory and pedagogy by discussing how assessment scholars rejected objectivist assessment procedures in favor of constructivist assessment models (see the section “Paradigm Shift . . .,” pp. 10-14); and by examining how the DCM research model grew out of Huot’s (2002) social constructivist “Principles for a New Theory And Practice of Writing Assessment” and professional policy statements that invoked these principles (see the section “Social Constructivist . . .,” pp. 14-18).

The review of research illustrates the applicability of the DCM research model for examining placement assessment practices by arguing that Broad’s (2003) DCM study of City University’s CWA practices, based upon the theory of complementarity--the theoretical rationale for using rhetorical, democratic, civic disputation to validate writing assessments--can be adapted to study the 2006 GSW Placement Program’s CWA evaluative practices (see the section
“Theory of Complementarity…”, pp. 18-22); and by illustrating how placement assessment
theory and methodologies came to reflect and advance the social constructivist principles of exit
assessment measures (see the section “Applicability of Exit Assessment Theory…,” pp. 22-32).

Finally, this review of research demonstrates the germaneness of adapting the DCM
research model for studying the constructivist content validity of the Placement Program by
presenting the rationale for conducting a focused constructivist content validity inquiry and
building a validation argument based upon the DCM research model (see the section “Focused
Constructivist Content Validity Inquiry…,” pp. 32-41); and by situating this DCM validity
inquiry within the first three generations or waves of DCM applications--applications built upon
social constructivist, exit assessment theory and CWA pedagogies (see the section “The First
Three Generations…”, pp. 41-50).

“Chapter Three: Overview of the Study” substantiates the principal claim with an
overview of the study’s setting and historical context and the study’s initial research questions
and methodology based upon the pilot study: This chapter’s “Setting of the Study,” pp. 52-64,
describes the study’s setting and historical context by defining my role as a participant-observer
ethnographer (see the section “Participant-Observer Ethnographer,” pp. 53-56); by providing the
setting and historical context of the dissertation study with respect to the writing program’s exit
and placement assessment practices (see the section “Historical Overview…,” pp. 57-58); by
describing the writing program’s current placement model and online writing placement test (see
the section “GSW Online Placement…,” pp. 59-62); and by outlining the current evaluative
procedures for placing essays into the program’s course sequence: English 110, English 111,
and English 112 (see the section “Placement Procedures,” pp. 62-64).
This chapter’s section “Study,” pp. 64-83, illustrates how the study’s methodology was designed to address the initial principal and supporting research questions by providing a brief overview of the pilot study and principal and supporting research questions (see the section “Pilot Study and Research Questions,” pp. 65-71 and “Appendix A: Pilot Study,” pp. 213-267); by presenting a synopsis of the study’s research participants and research instruments (see the section “Methodology,” pp. 71-82) and by providing a summary of the Dynamic Criteria Mapping data analysis procedures employed in the study (see the section “Dynamic Criteria Mapping…,” pp. 82-83).

“Chapter Four: Study Findings and Analysis” implements the principal claim in the study and presents a focused constructivist content validity argument to strengthen the Placement Program’s evaluative procedures: This chapter executes this claim by providing an overview of the study’s participants (see the section “Research Participants,” p. 85); by describing the final research methodology (see the section “Data Collection Procedures,” pp. 86-87); by presenting the final focused data sets and principal and supporting research questions (see the section “Focused Data Sets…,” pp. 87-94); by summarizing the data analysis procedures—grounded theory methodology, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, QSR International NVivo 7 qualitative coding software, quantitative analyses, and Broad’s Dynamic Criteria Mapping procedures—used to create this study’s Dynamic Criteria Maps and quantitative codebooks (see the section “Data Analysis Procedures,” pp. 94-114; “Figure 1: English 110 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 105; “Figure 2: English 111 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 106; “Figure 3: English 112 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 107; and “Table 1: Quantitative Codebooks of Frequently Used Criteria,” p. 108); by defining the correlation between placement readers’ evaluative criteria and the writing program’s curricular criteria with respect to the criteria maps and codebooks (see the section “Findings,”
CHAPTER ONE

pp. 114-134 and “Appendix B: Study’s Data and Results,” pp. 268-654); and by providing the focused constructivist content validation argument: four validation-argument questions for the Placement Program to consider to strengthen the relationship between the Placement Program’s CWA practices and the program’s curriculum (see the section “Discussion,” pp. 134-149).

“Chapter Five: Conclusion and Theoretical and Pedagogical Applications of Study” provides the theoretical and pedagogical applications of the dissertation study’s validated claim: This chapter puts forth these applications by presenting and discussing the main argument that justifies the applicability of DCM to placement assessment research (see the section “Validation of Employing…,” pp. 151-153); by acknowledging the limitations of the study for writing program administrators interested in using DCM at their institutions and by describing Broad’s (2003, pp. 130-134) streamlined DCM approach (see the section “Study Limitations…,” pp. 153-156); by providing ten simplified, efficient applications for employing the dissertation study in placement assessment contexts (see the section “DCM Heuristic…,” pp. 156-183); by identifying the current obstacles posed by the federal government and corporations to DCM research and by presenting ten questions for writing program administrators to consider before implementing DCM (see the section “Political Impediments…,” pp. 183-191); and by exploring the possibilities for the revision, publication, and/or continuation of this dissertation study and by discussing implications this study poses for researchers in the writing assessment field (see “Implications…,” pp. 191-197).
CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL RATIONALE FOR THE DCM RESEARCH MODEL

Introduction

The purpose of “Chapter Two: Theoretical Rationale” is to justify the dissertation’s central claim: Broad’s (2003) DCM research model can be adapted to provide a focused validation argument to strengthen the 2006 GSW Placement Program’s constructivist content validity, the relationship between the GSW Placement Program’s communal writing assessment (CWA) practices and the GSW curriculum. Chapter Two’s “Review of Research,” pp. 10-50, supports this claim by establishing the currency of the DCM research model in exit assessment theory and pedagogy, the applicability of the DCM research model for examining placement assessment practices, and most importantly, the germaneness of adapting the DCM research model for studying the constructivist content validity of the 2006 GSW Placement Program.

The first two sections of the “Review of Research” situate Broad’s (2003) DCM as the most current research model for understanding what teachers actually value in assessing writing during exit assessment. The first section (“Paradigm Shift . . .,” pp. 10-14) details how assessment scholars have rejected positivist, scientific, psychometric, objectivist assessment procedures in favor of rhetorical, contextualized, collaborative, constructivist assessment models. The second section (“Social Constructivist . . .,” pp. 14-18) explains how the DCM research model grew out of Huot’s (2002) social constructivist “Principles for a New Theory And Practice of Writing Assessment” and professional, pedagogical, policy statements that invoke Huot’s rhetorical, constructivist new theory.

The next two sections justify the appropriateness of using DCM to study placement assessment practices and the GSW Placement Program assessment model. The third section (“Theory of Complementarity….,” pp. 18-22) argues that Broad’s (2003) DCM study of City
University’s CWA practices based upon the theory of complementarity, the rationale for using rhetorical, democratic, civic debate to validate writing assessments, can be adapted to study the 2006 GSW Placement Program’s CWA evaluative practices. The fourth section (“Applicability of Exit Assessment Theory…,” pp. 22-32) illustrates how placement assessment theory and methodologies came to reflect and advance the social constructivist principles of exit assessment measures. Placement theory and pedagogy underwent a paradigmatic shift that paralleled the recent paradigmatic shift from objectivist theoretical models to social constructivist theoretical models in exit assessment.

The final two sections establish the relevance for using the DCM research model to study the connection between the 2006 GSW Placement Program’s CWA practices and the GSW curriculum. The fifth section (“Focused Constructivist Content Validity Inquiry…,” pp. 32-41) presents the rationale for conducting a focused constructivist content validity inquiry and building a validation argument based upon the DCM research model. Chapter Two concludes with the sixth section (“The First Three Generations…,” pp. 41-50), which situates this DCM validity inquiry within the first three generations or waves of DCM applications--applications built upon social constructivist, exit assessment theory and CWA pedagogies.

Review of Research

Paradigm Shift from Objectivist to Constructivist Exit Assessment Models

Patricia Lynne (2004) and Elliot (2005) provided the terminology for understanding the significance of the historical, paradigmatic shift from objectivist, theoretical models to social constructivist, theoretical models in exit assessment. Lynne (2004) explained that a “paradigm” is “a shorthand indicating a set of common models, values, commitments, and symbolic exchanges that unite disciplinary communities” (p. 5). Lynne’s study described the conflict
between the “objectivist” paradigm of psychometric measurement theory and the “social constructionist” paradigm of composition studies (p. 6). With respect to indirect, psychometric theoretical models, Lynne (2004) argued that the discipline of psychometrics is based upon a “positivist” epistemology; mental aptitude can be measured because “mental processes exist” (p. 29). The validity of an assessment, therefore, depends upon how well it measures actual “competencies” or “aptitudes” (p. 31).

Elliot (2005) presented a historical survey of the impact of psychology on assessment, and he argued that the “scientifically-based scholarship” that emerged in the 1860s was based upon an European orientation to the scientific empiricism of psychology measurement; such an orientation led to institutions’ attention to “educational psychology” (pp. 4, 30). However, Lynne (2004) argued that “contemporary literacy scholarship” is based on a “social constructionist epistemology” that supports a “contextual” and “social constructionist paradigm” (p. 45). In this “social constructionist paradigm,” literacy is grounded in local and historical “contexts,” “multiple literacies,” and “rhetorical values” (pp. 56-58). A “constructivist” evaluation entails a collaborative and contextualized endeavor that involves everyone affected by the assessment (p. 67). Overall, Lynne (2004) asserted that the “objectivist paradigm” values the “universal ideals of writing ability,” and the “contextualist constructivist paradigm” values “the scene in which the assessment takes place” (p. 122). Ultimately, she argued that composition scholars must “adopt social constructionism as an epistemological basis for principles of writing assessment” (pp. 121-122).

Assessment scholars have pointed to a paradigm shift from indirect, psychometric, theoretical assessment models to direct, social constructivist, theoretical assessment models; furthermore, this paradigmatic shift has been evident in individual assessment scholar’s works.
Contemporary scholars White and Huot have shifted their positions from psychometric to constructivist assessment models in recent years. Kathleen B. Yancey (1999) argued that between 1950 and 1999, writing assessment arrived in three, consecutive, chronological waves: “objective tests,” the “holistically scored essay,” and “portfolio assessment and programmatic assessment” (p. 484). Lynne (2004) asserted that Yancey’s “waves” of assessment reflected the shift from objectivist, absolute, psychometric terminology to a subjective lexicon, which included “interpretation,” “reflection,” and “ethics” (p. 42). Lynne (2004) explained that Yancey’s chronology indicates that portfolios were seen as more valid than impromptu essays scored holistically, which were seen as more valid than indirect, objective assessment measures (p. 38). Yancey’s (1999) “fourth wave” foretold the paradigmatic shift towards constructivist writing assessment models; she predicted that the “fourth wave,” the next movement in assessment, would involve “epistemological and ideological work” and “assessment as an interpretive act” (p. 501).

White (2005b) proposed a new scoring method which echoed Yancey’s “fourth wave” by emphasizing “assessment as an interpretive act” of both instructors and students. Instead of relying on traditional, holistic scoring to assess portfolios, White offered an alternative for evaluating portfolios for large-scale assessment; teachers should draw up a set of uniform learning outcomes for a given program applicable to the portfolio assessment, and students should write and submit a “reflective letter” that argues that they met these learning outcomes (pp. 586-587). White’s argument for “outcomes assessment” marked a paradigmatic shift from his earlier advocacy of traditional, objective, holistic portfolio scoring (see White, 1994). Similarly, Huot (1993) argued for the “technique” of traditional, holistic scoring; he asserted that holistic scoring assisted evaluators in assessing essays (p. 228). Nine years later, Huot (2002)
criticized the shortcomings of the “technology of testing” inherent in “traditional,” holistic scoring systems that emphasized positivist epistemologies, focused on students’ writing out of context, and emphasized the “machinery of the scoring session” (pp. 86, 147). Lynne (2004) explained that assessment scholars had developed a “constructivist evaluation” to challenge objectivist measures (p. 61). In fact, Lynne argued that the paradigmatic “clash” between the “incompatible” values of the educational measurement and composition theories has been ongoing, and the two paradigms have been “effectively irreconcilable” historically (pp. 4, 167).

This paradigmatic shift from modern, psychometric measures to postmodern, constructivist models has been formally acknowledged by English and assessment scholars. With regard to the earliest paradigmatic shift toward constructivist models, Elliot (2005) explained that around 1950, “at modernist mid-century,” assessment emphasized test “design”; however, “at century’s postmodern end,” assessment emphasized “context,” for the “great meta-narratives collapsed” (p. 286). Diane Penrod (2005) argued that social constructivism and multiple rhetorics emerged in the 1980s due in large part to compositionists, like Peter Elbow, who advocated “direct,” “performative forms for evaluating student writing” (p. xxviii). Elbow (1990) confirmed the emerging social constructivist paradigm of the 1980s, for the English Coalition Conference of 1987 concluded that “the business of college English Studies” is a “deeply social,” “constructive” endeavor involving everyone in the English profession (p. 18). Huot observed that assessment research before 1990 focused on creating and establishing reliable, standardized writing assessment measures (Bowman M., Mahon M., & Pogell S., 2004). However, Huot (2002) explained that the “new procedures” of assessment deemphasized the decontextualized “generalizability” of “standardization” by focusing on the local “context” of the teachers and stakeholders involved in assessment procedures (p. 104). Invoking Yancey’s
“fourth wave” prediction, Broad (2003) explained that Huot foresaw the “historical shift away from positivist psychometrics in evaluation” and provided five “principles that inform what he sees as the coming wave of writing assessment practices” (p. 13).

*Social Constructivist, Exit Assessment Theory and Policy Statements*

Assessment scholars now recognize that Huot’s (2002) theoretical framework of social constructivist theory, the five “Principles for a New Theory And Practice of Writing Assessment,” represents the most current exit assessment theory (see Huot, 1996, “Toward a New Theory of Writing Assessment” for his initial discussion of this theory). Huot’s (2002) five principles required that assessment measures be based upon the institution’s needs (“site-based”), that procedures be administered wholly by the institution (“locally-controlled”), that procedures adhere to the institution’s educative goals and learning outcomes (“context-sensitive”), that procedures support rhetorical “principles” (“rhetorically-based”), and that procedures be available to everyone involved in the assessment (“accessible”) (p. 105).

Lynne (2004) argued that Huot’s theoretical model—“site-based,” “locally-controlled,” “context-sensitive,” “rhetorically-based,” and “accessible” assessment—was based on the “contextual paradigm of literacy” (p. 83). Lynne (2004) explained that these rhetorical and contextual principles are consistent with contemporary composition theory (p. 83). In his recent survey of writing assessment research, Russel K. Durst (2006) made clear that Huot’s (2002) work has provided writing instructors and program administrators with a complete study of writing assessment research and a comprehensive explanation of the theoretical tenets needed to support the large-scale exit assessment of writing “while emphasizing the local, context-dependent nature of such activity” (p. 95).

Both the CCCC Committee on Assessment (1995) and the CCCC Committee on Teaching, Learning, and Assessing Writing in Digital Environments (2004) advocated the contemporary, social constructivist, pedagogical model for writing assessment. The CCCC Committee on Assessment (1995) criticized standardized tests (typical of the objectivist paradigm) that focused on “error” and acknowledged the “conflicts with current cognitive and psychological research” (p. 433). The Committee recommended that teachers and administrators follow “the latest research on language learning” (pp. 431, 433). Lynne (2004) argued that the Committee’s statement presented policy guidelines based on “the best current thought on writing and learning” (p. 81). She pointed out that such research emphasized that assessment should be “locally designed” and “socially contextualized” (pp. 431-432). Appealing to Huot’s call for “locally-controlled,” “accessible” assessment procedures, the CCCC Committee called on
various stakeholders to be involved in writing assessment—students, faculty, administrators, and legislators (pp. 435-437).

Likewise, the CCCC Committee on Teaching, Learning, and Assessing Writing in Digital Environments (2004) argued that “all writing is social” (p. 786) and contextual; teaching writing necessarily involves students, faculty members, writing program administrators, and institutions (pp. 786-788). Echoing Huot’s “site-based” assessment principle, the Committee argued that all stakeholders are bound by the contexts of “place” and “time”; and therefore, writing faculty must follow the CCCC Committee on Assessment’s (1995) position statement in assessing students’ writing in “face-to-face,” “hybrid,” and “online” writing environments (p. 787). In general, Lynne (2004) argued that the CCCC Committee on Assessment’s (1995) statement supported the “contextual paradigm of literacy” because the Committee contended that the social “context” should guide writing assessment practices (p. 78), a paradigm reflected by the Council of Writing Program Administrators (1999) and the CCCC Committee on Second Language Writing (2001).

The Council of Writing Program Administrators (1999) provided the “WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition”—a policy statement for writing faculty that established uniform first-year composition learning outcomes which reflect principles of the social constructivist paradigm. Yancey (2005) argued that a goal of the “Outcomes Statement” was to use “the vocabulary of the discipline” in order “to make it congruent with current theory in the field” of composition and rhetorical theory (p. 218). Susanmarie Harrington (2005a) explained that the “Outcome Statements” was “rooted in disciplinary knowledge enough to have status in the field” and designed to help faculty across the disciplines “consider how to teach students to become increasingly effective writers” (p. xvi). Echoing principles of the CCCC Committee on Assessment (1995) and the CCCC Committee on Teaching, Learning, and Assessing Writing in
Digital Environments (2004), the Council of Writing Program Administrators (1999) argued that “learning to write” is both an “individual and social” learning process (p. 60). More specifically, the Council asserted that writing faculty must help students “understand the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes” as a specific learning “outcome” to be met before exiting a first-year composition sequence (pp. 60-62).

Similarly, the CCCC Committee on Second Language Writing’s (2001) “Statement on Second-Language Writing and Writers” advised writing faculty to consider “second-language perspectives” with respect to “collaborative” writing strategies. The Committee called on writing teachers and administrators to be responsive to the “linguistic” and “cultural” needs of “second-language writing in the context of writing programs” (p. 670). Likewise, with regard to assessment, the Committee argued that placement and exit assessment exams should be sensitive to students’ cultural and linguistic knowledge (p. 670-671). Both the Council of Writing Program Administrators (1999) and the CCCC Committee on Second Language Writing (2001) invoked Huot’s (2002) “context-sensitive,” “site-based” assessment principles, which emphasize an adherence to local learning outcomes (p. 105).

In order to implement the “Principles for a New Theory And Practice of Writing Assessment,” Huot (1996) proclaimed the composition field must “become active in assessment issues and active developers of these new, emergent practices” (p. 564). Six years later, Huot (2002) concluded (Re)Articulating Writing Assessment for Teaching and Learning by issuing a “challenge” to “create a new future” for writing assessment’s “new theory” (p. 191). To some extent, the CCCC Committee on Assessment (1995), CCCC Committee on Teaching, Learning, and Assessing Writing in Digital Environments (2004), Council of Writing Program Administrators (1999), and CCCC Committee on Second Language Writing (2001) have issued
pedagogical edicts for educators that support social constructivist principles and Huot’s new
type of writing assessment.

Broad’s (2003) DCM model, however, took Huot’s challenge a step farther and offered
the most fully articulated research model based upon Huot’s new theory assessment principles.
Lynne (2004) argued that Broad’s model presented “a stronger and more systematic approach to
articulating the substance of an assessment than any other method we currently have” (p. 159).
In fact, Broad explained that he proposed DCM because most recent scholarly work had been
theoretical and compositionists needed a practical, qualitative research methodology which was
“supported by well-developed theory” (p. 14). Just as Huot (2002) predicted that the new
theoretical framework he promoted would be “revised in a continuing process of validation and
reflection” (p. 191), Broad’s DCM research model, which studied a portfolio assessment process
supported by the theory of complementarity and the pedagogy of communal writing assessment
(CWA), exemplified and enhanced Huot’s theoretical framework by providing a methodology
for validating assessments.

Theory of Complementarity and Communal Writing Assessment Pedagogy

Broad (2003) designed his social constructivist, rhetorical, DCM research model to
examine the exit assessment practices, based upon Broad and Boyd’s (2005) theory of
complementarity and CWA pedagogy with respect to City University. Likewise, this
dissertation’s DCM constructivist content validity inquiry studies the 2006 GSW Placement
Program’s CWA evaluative practices grounded in complementarity. Whereas Broad’s (2003)
DCM study examined groups of instructors engaged in exit CWA, this DCM study examined
pairs of evaluators engaged in placement CWA. According to Broad and Boyd (2005),
complementarity provides the justification for the rhetorical, constructivist CWA pedagogy
involved in portfolio assessment, and DCM offers a research model for assessing these evaluative practices.

Broad and Boyd (2005) argued that Huot’s (1996, 2002) theoretical framework neither provided the “epistemological” foundation for constructing “new principles and procedures” nor answered the following question: “When we leap from the theoretical foundation of positivism, on what, if anything, do we land?” (p. 10). Instead, they provided the theory of complementarity as a response to this conundrum. Complementarity more completely defined Huot’s (2002) call for assessment practices that invoked “rhetorical principles” crucial for educators employing inclusive, local assessments (p. 105) and provided support for CWA and portfolio assessment pedagogies, which Broad’s (2003) study examined and illuminated.

Based upon theories in the fields of quantum physics, rhetoric, and education, complementarity involves a rhetorical, democratic, constructivist writing assessment process in which assessors publicly convince “one another through a process of disputing conflicting truth claims and negotiating contingent, communally sanctioned truths through discourse” during the act of assessment (Broad & Boyd, 2005, pp. 10-13). Broad (1997) earlier explained that CWA involved “two or more judges working to reach a joint decision on the basis of a writing performance” (p. 134). Beth Kalikoff (2005) invoked key principles of “complementarity” and CWA when she advocated “assessment as a form of participatory democracy” and explained that assessment should emphasize “agency,” “deliberation,” and “civic engagement” (p. 109) and should be “communitarian,” “formative,” “democratic,” and “dynamic” (p. 119-121). According to complementarity, assessors must negotiate diverse, multiple postmodern truths in order to validate large-scale, portfolio assessment judgments (Broad & Boyd, 2005, p. 12).
Broad (2004) asserted that numerous rhetorical perspectives in an assessment increased the validity of CWA; multiple assessors produce deeper and more revealing assessment judgments than a single assessor. Broad and Boyd (2005) insisted that diversity should be both encouraged and valued over “homogeneity” among assessors (p. 16). In fact, Broad (1994) had argued earlier that because “social context” determines the “construction of textual meaning,” multiple and divergent interpretations of texts are necessary elements of rhetorical, large-scale, portfolio assessments (pp. 265-266). For instance, Russel K. Durst, Marjorie Roemer, and Lucille M. Shultz (1994) argued that at the University of Cincinnati portfolio assessors participated in “speech-acts” in which they articulated, debated, and revised their assessment decisions in a public forum (p. 286).

The value of complementarity—the theoretical rationale for using rhetorical, democratic, civic disputation to validate a comprehensive writing assessment—lies in its characterization of CWA, the communal writing assessment practice Broad (1997, 2000, 2003) studied. Broad and Boyd (2005) examined the negotiations of City University’s portfolio assessors to demonstrate how the theory of complementarity supported and illuminated CWA pedagogy. Referring to Broad’s earlier research at City University (see Broad, 1997), Broad and Boyd (2005) explained that the writing program’s administrators, teachers, and outside evaluators engaged in public, rhetorical, democratic CWA at City University with respect to “sometimes fiercely conflictual” discussions among the three groups; however, a more “complete view” of students’ portfolio proficiencies emerged from these three different viewpoints (p. 17). They explained that “portfolio assessment” and CWA provide pedagogical “practices” that epitomize Huot’s rhetorical new theory or “new paradigm” of writing assessment (p. 10).
Broad (2003) argued that he developed and utilized his DCM research model to analyze and map the rhetorical values of teachers and administrators employing CWA in portfolio assessment at City University. This dissertation’s DCM constructivist validity inquiry provided a focused validation argument after culling, examining, analyzing, and mapping the rhetorical values of evaluators employing CWA in placement assessment. Because Broad culled rhetorical values directly from how educators’ articulated assessment decisions, he explained that DCM is based upon “communal assessment” (p. 122) or CWA. He examined City University’s rhetorical portfolio process which “invited instructors to tell unfettered truths about what they valued in the texts before them and compelled others to listen to those truths without dismissing them” (p. 25).

Broad (2003) analyzed hundreds of pages of notes based upon observations, transcribed group discussions and individual interviews, and he studied program documents to produce an “emic” Dynamic Criteria Map of the instructors’ rhetorical values and criteria (pp. 24-26). He produced an “emic” map of instructors’ rhetorical values based wholly on “the words and concepts” from his “research participants” evaluative discussions (p. 17). Overall, Broad’s study of the City University’s communal portfolio assessment process, as well as this dissertation study, examined the rhetorical, democratic CWA supported by Broad and Boyd’s (2005) theory of complementarity.

However, it must be noted that Broad and Boyd (2005) fully articulated the theory of complementarity as a theoretical rationale for preexisting CWA and portfolio assessment practices after the publication of Broad’s (1997, 2000, 2003) studies. Complementarity, therefore, provides retroactive theoretical support for Broad’s (2003) DCM research model, for this theory describes and supports the CWA practices of portfolio assessors at City University that Broad studied and analyzed. Even though Broad’s DCM research model preceded Broad
and Boyd’s (2005) argument for the theory of complementarity, the authors explained that the pedagogy of CWA portfolio assessment has preceded theoretical support historically—“to practice first and theorize last” (p. 18). In other words, compositionists implemented new pedagogical approaches before fully articulating the supporting theory (p. 18). The authors explained that their article’s purpose was to reinforce and defend existing portfolio assessment practices with more extensive theoretical support (p. 18). In response to their argument for complementarity and CWA, Huot (2005) explained that Broad and Boyd (2005) provided “a firm theoretical and epistemological basis for writing assessment theory and practice” (p. 2).

Huot’s affirmation of Broad and Boyd’s (2005) theoretical rationale for portfolio assessment measures that employ CWA confirmed that Broad’s (2003) DCM research model is equipped to study any communal, rhetorical, assessment model. As a result, it is reasonable to hypothesize that Broad’s (2003) social constructivist, rhetorical, DCM research model can be adapted to study placement assessment models that employ CWA evaluative practices. Similarly, because complementarity identified how DCM investigated the values of educators born out of communal, collaborative assessment deliberations, it is reasonable to use complementarity as a theoretical framework for studying CWA practices in placement assessment contexts, namely the 2006 GSW Placement Program’s evaluative practices. Just as Broad’s DCM research model reflected and advanced social constructivist, rhetorical principles of Huot’s (2002) new theory, placement assessment theory and applications also came to reflect and advance social constructivist principles of exit assessment theory.

**Applicability of Exit Assessment Theory to Placement Assessment Theory**

Placement theory and pedagogy have undergone a paradigmatic shift that paralleled the recent paradigmatic shift in exit assessment from objectivist theoretical models to social
constructivist, theoretical models. Mirroring assessment scholars’ response to Huot’s (2002) call for a new theory of writing assessment based upon social constructivism, writing assessment scholars and specialists have called for placement assessment theory and pedagogy that reflect the current social constructivist paradigm for exit assessment. White (1989, 1994, 1995, 2005a) has insisted that placement exams should be derived from the “context” of the curriculum, which echoed Huot’s (2002) call for “site-based,” “locally-controlled,” and “context-sensitive” assessment measures (p. 105). White (1995) asserted, “No assessment device is good or bad in itself but only in context” (p. 34). Similarly, Daniel J. Royer and Roger Gilles (2002) argued that writing program administrators must determine their local placement needs, “the context-specific institutional variables affecting placement decisions” (p. 149).

With respect to early context-specific, local entrance assessment, White (2001a) discussed how he helped to implement an early form of direct assessment, the traditional holistic essay, for the California State University (CSU) System in the early 1970s. White explained that when Chancellor Glenn Dumke of the CSU System tried to secretly implement College Level Examination (CLEP) multiple-choice exams administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS), Vice Chancellor Gerhard Freiderich and his colleagues, including White, anonymously called the Los Angeles Times and San Francisco Chronicle to report the Chancellor’s secret plan; as a result, the papers reported the likelihood of “instant sophomores” created by the exams (p. 312). In response, the Chancellor authorized the English department faculty to administer their own placement exams; therefore, the English Equivalency Exam, a holistic essay measure, was first administered in 1973 (pp. 314-315). The holistic portion of this test signaled a major paradigmatic shift from indirect to direct assessment measures.
Although White (2001a) considered the test to be a direct measure of writing, the CSU’s English Equivalency Exam (a traditional, numerically scored, holistic essay exam) came to be viewed as another indirect, objective, psychometric assessment measure of writing by assessment scholars. For instance, Huot (2002) explained that “current-traditional” methods of indirect placement also included the traditional “holistic scoring” of essays, which “require[s] the additional steps necessary to code rater decisions numerically and to apply those numbers to specific courses” (p. 95). Huot and Schendel (2002) asserted that there have been two principal systems of placement—“holistic scoring” and “locally developed” placement. In “holistic scoring,” readers give “numerical” scores to an essay, and these scores are converted into writing courses (p. 217). Harrington (2005b) stressed that placement decisions must be based upon “local student backgrounds” and “how the placement functions in the academic lives” of students (p. 12). Harrington (1998) explained that “placement testing involves a local decision” in which readers place students into writing classes they need (p. 59). Huot (2002) pointed out that many institutions have developed “new” methods to place students directly into courses (p. 95).

Broad’s (2003) well-known proclamation that “the age of the rubric has passed” (p. 4) with respect to traditional, exit assessment rubrics paralleled the move by post-secondary assessment specialists to reject traditional, holistic scoring rubrics, such as those used to score White’s English Equivalency Exam, in favor of assessment measures that reflect assessors’ expertise. (Refer to Wilson, 2006, for a thorough critique of rubrics in elementary and secondary education.) Gary Calpas and William L. Smith (1995) argued that in traditional, holistic assessment, placement is “a detached and isolated act,” an act divorced from the curriculum in which students are placed (p. 4). Readers’ expertise in placing students according to traditional, holistic scales does not train readers to foresee the “potential” of writers in a particular
“curricular context” (p. 4). On the other hand, foregrounding the central role of the writing program’s instructors and curriculum in placement decisions, Smith (1993) and Richard Haswell (1998, 2001a, 2001b) provided theoretical and pedagogical rationales for the value of placement evaluators’ curricular, “expert” knowledge and experience in making direct, socially-constructed placement decisions. Both Smith and Haswell have applied key principles of social constructivist, exit assessment theory and pedagogy to recent placement theory and practice with respect to readers’ curricular expertise. Harrington (2005b) pointed out that Smith and Haswell’s “expert scoring systems,” in which teachers make placement decisions, has become the “dominant mode of scoring for direct placement tests” (p. 21).

Smith’s (1993) discussion of his “new” system of placement, based upon his comprehensive validation research at the University of Pittsburgh, demonstrated the paradigm shift in placement assessment from the “indirect,” objectivist assessment paradigm to the “direct,” socially constructed assessment paradigm based on the curricular knowledge of the local “expert reader” (p. 143). Huot (2007) proclaimed that Smith’s validation research “supplies the finest model of validation for writing assessment currently available” (p. 27). Smith (1993) explained that his “new” system of placement was a reaction to traditional, objective methods of placement. He explained that the older “standardized,” “objective” tests, such as the “SAT” and the “Test of Standard Written English,” were “about writing” [italics added] (p. 143). However, Smith (1993) contended that “new,” locally-created assessments were developed because of the “flaws in indirect measurement” (p. 143). He made clear that composition specialists had come to favor recent direct measures because these methods have been proven both “valid” and “reliable” in placement (p. 143). Similarly, Royer and Gilles (2002) pointed out that writing program administrators now prefer direct assessment measures,
such writing samples or portfolios, to determine a writer’s proficiency (p. 268). Lynne (2004) argued that this direct placement model, which relied on local “expert experience,” paralleled current constructivist theory in exit assessment, and therefore, the “expert” and “constructivist” placement models approximately reflect contemporary composition theory and pedagogy (p. 74). In fact, Lynne explained that recent developments, such as the “expert reader,” “constructivist” placement model, and continuing research into alternative methods, have suggested a paradigm shift: “The current dominant paradigm of educational measurement theory—as we understand and apply it—cannot answer the questions we currently have about writing assessment” (p. 75).

Prefiguring Huot’s (2002) call for a new theory of writing assessment, Smith’s (1993) expert placement model was designed to address his program’s placement needs (“site-based”), was administered by him and his colleagues (“locally-controlled”), and was constructed to reflect the curricular goals of the writing program and instructors (“context-sensitive”). Huot explained that Smith developed a placement program in which expert teachers made “valid” placement decisions. With respect to expert models, Huot pointed out that different individuals read essays differently based upon their own knowledge and educational training; therefore, individuals who make placement decisions in their areas of expertise make more valid and reliable decisions (Bowman M., et al., 2004). Indeed, Smith’s (1993) placement system depended upon “adequacy” or “appropriate” placement decisions (p. 185). Penrod (2005) explained that “adequacy” refers to how compositionists “measure whether the writing is acceptable for the situation” (p. 112).

According to Smith’s (1993) revised rating procedures, two composition faculty members independently read each student’s essay; each essay had to be “accepted” by two readers from the same course to be placed into that course. Smith explained that raters simply
chose to “accept” or “reject” each essay into one of the classes they had taught lately: “The raters were told they should accept students who resembled students in their courses during the first half of the term” (p. 193). If the rater rejected an essay, he/she gave it to another rater, who representing another class, accepted or rejected the essay (p. 194). Smith (1993) explained that such a procedure was “direct” because unlike traditional holistic scorers who assessed essays’ textual features according to numerical scores and scales, readers “assess the writer in order to make a decision about the writer” through “direct assessment” (p. 147). Using “direct assessment,” the reader placed the student in “the course which best matches his/her needs and abilities” (p. 148). Concerning the University of Pittsburgh’s placement program, expert teachers envision the context of student writers, for they “see through a text—they can see the students’ thinking and why the student wrote what she did” (Calpas & Smith, 1995, p. 4). Calpas and Smith (1995) stressed that placement programs must “place students, not essays” into a curriculum (p. 4), and when teachers placed students into their courses, they acknowledged that the students would benefit from their courses (p. 5).

With respect to the expert, curricular knowledge of readers, Smith’s (1993) raters taught the courses in which they placed the students, for “the raters must have the privileged knowledge of students that can only come from teaching the courses,” and they must rely on their knowledge of these courses for placement (p. 174). According to this method, Smith explained that because placement depends upon the “expert opinion of the rater,” a reader places students into courses they have already taught (p. 192). More specifically, Calpas and Smith (1995) explained that in the “expert model,” a teacher’s “knowledge” refers to the “highly focused and integrated curricular and pedagogical knowledge that is gained from having recently taught multiple sections of one composition course” (p. 4).
Prominent assessment scholars soon came to recognize and value Smith’s (1993) expert placement model. Huot (2002, pp. 95-96) argued that such placement methods provide an efficient, effective placement system that relies on the experience of the raters; Lynne (2004, p. 61) pointed out that the “expert reader model” emphasized the experience and expertise of evaluators to make judgments about writing; and Harrington (2005b, p. 14) asserted that the “expert rater system” values “teacher expertise” and confers authority to “experienced course teachers” to place students (p. 14). Ultimately, Calpas and Smith (1995) argued that in the “expert model,” the “locus of control is the teachers” (p. 5). In this model, placement is explicitly connected to coursework: “Placement reading is a very real continuation of the pedagogical and curricular work composition teachers do in the composition classroom” (p. 6).


Haswell (2001a) advocated the social constructivist paradigm through the “teacher-option” and “categorization” theoretical placement frameworks, which paralleled Smith’s (1993) expert-model. Lynne (2004) contended that Haswell’s “categorization theory” challenged the objectivist paradigm of psychometric principles (p. 96). For instance, Haswell (2001b) explained that assessment programs should be created by “grassroots concerns and local context” and embedded within an university-wide context (pp. 39-40). More specifically, Haswell (2001b) discussed the locally-contextualized placement program involving cross-disciplinary readers known as the “two-tier rating system” at Washington State University (WSU). Because traditional holistic scoring measures would be neither cost effective nor efficient, Haswell (2001b) developed a “two-tier method” in which the first reader, the “tier-one reader,” read and placed students directly into the regular section of freshman composition (English 101) if the
placements were “obvious” (p. 42). If the reader could not make an “obvious placement,” the “tier-two reader” decided if the students should be placed into basic writing (English 100), a one-hour tutorial taken in conjunction with regular composition (English 102), or advanced credit (p. 42). Consequently, more than half of the students were placed into regular freshman composition due to the “tier-one” placement reading (p. 44). Over time, the placement readers came to include teachers both within and outside of the English Department at WSU (p. 50). As tier-one and tier-two readers, knowledgeable teachers made Huot’s (2002, p. 105) “site-based,” “locally-controlled” placement decisions based upon context-sensitive curricular goals.

Haswell (2001a) explained that “categorization theory” supported the “obvious placement” pedagogy at WSU and the contextualist paradigm (p. 57). Lynne (2004) stressed that “categorization theory” implies that those with expertise can make more informed placement decisions than those with little expertise (p. 96). According to the “categorization theory,” readers “sort students into writing courses” (Haswell, 2001a, p. 57). Haswell pointed out that there were two kinds of categorizations. In “prototype” categorizations, readers judged how well the essay represented the “best example” of a given category (p. 58). Haswell explained that tier-one readers were usually novices, so they relied on “prototype” categorizations (p. 60). However, “tier-two” readers, who must sort and place the less “obvious” cases (e.g., basic and English as a Second Language writers), relied more on “exemplar” categorizations than tier one readers; “exemplar” categorizations depended upon contextualizing and comparing “old experiences” with “new experiences” (pp. 58, 60). Haswell (2001a) explained that the “exemplar” categorization was the basis for “teacher-option placement” in which “readers do not rely on an essential set of features but rather on previous experience” (p. 58).
In “teacher-option placement,” teacher-readers place students into their courses because the placement essays are similar to essays written in their courses (p. 58). Echoing criticisms of traditional, holistic scoring, Haswell (2001a) explained that in “holistic rating,” however, readers do not rely upon information about the writer to ensure that “the holistic rater’s sense of objectivity” is separate from context (p. 55). “Holistic rating,” echoing the objectivist paradigm, depended upon “classical categorization” in which readers matched essays to unique textual properties; furthermore, categories were clearly separated from one another (p. 58). Lynne (2004) argued that holistic assessment, albeit a direct measure of writing, was actually an objective assessment measure: “Holistic assessment has ‘face validity’ (it looks like the “right” thing to evaluate), but with its emphasis on inter-reader reliability, its aim is ideally to be as objective as multiple-choice examinations” (p. 37).

Haswell (1998) argued earlier that placement categories do not correspond to numbers on a scoring rubric, but they are “overlapping and variable concepts, whose centers may seem clear but whose boundaries are indistinct” (pp. 262-263). Harrington (2005b, p. 14) explained that Haswell’s placement readers assumed that students were arranged on a “performance continuum in which clear exemplars of a category (for example, ‘Comp I students’) were easy to recognize.” However, Haswell (1998) pointed out that some placement decisions, the less “obvious” placement decisions such as those involving ESL and/or honor students, required more experienced evaluators with specialized expertise (p. 261).

Royer and Gilles (2002) pointed out that writing assessment specialists, such as Smith and Haswell, developed “context-specific theories of writing assessment” (p. 149). Harrington (2005b) explained that both Smith and Haswell’s systems valued “teacher expertise” rather than the authority of the traditional, holistic rubric. She pointed out that the “holistic scorer” asks,
“What point on the scale most closely matches a description of this essay?” However, the “expert scorer” asks, “What course does this writer need to take?” (p. 22). The expert rater, therefore, values teaching and curricular expertise over traditional “scoring rubrics” in making placement decisions (p. 22). Lynne (2004) asserted that Haswell (2001a) invoked a “limited subjectivity,” which directly opposed objectivist, assessment principles (p. 96), and Harrington (2005b) argued that placement decisions were “interpretive” (p. 12). Moreover, Lynne (2004) explained that the placement procedures at WSU embodied current “social constructionism” practices; decisions at both tiers were “social” and made collaboratively, and placement readers drew on communal, disciplinary knowledge in placing students (p. 151). Huot (2002) pointed out that both Smith and Haswell created placement procedures to solve specific “local assessment needs” rather than to adhere to a “psychometric framework,” and he explained that these procedures were “contextualized forms of placement” because they were based on the teachers’ knowledge of their writing curriculums (p. 96).

Three things laid the foundation for this dissertation’s study: Smith and Haswell’s reliance on experienced placement readers, which invoked Huot’s (2002, p. 105) “site-based,” “locally-controlled” placement decisions based upon “context-sensitive” curricular knowledge and course objectives; the pilot study of the 2005 GSW Placement Program and 2006 GSW online writing placement test; and the review of placement assessment and validity scholarship. Overall, Smith and Haswell’s placement models, the pilot study outcomes, and pertinent placement assessment and validity scholarship have all foregrounded the principle that teachers’ placement assessment decisions should be based upon their curricular knowledge. Since Smith and Haswell’s research has been examined, and the pilot study outcomes are covered in “Chapter Three: Overview of the Study,” pp. 51-83, the next section will review pertinent placement
focused constructivist content validity inquiry of the Placement Program.

Focused Constructivist Content Validity Inquiry and Validation Argument

The dissertation’s adaptation of DCM as a tool for validity inquiry is based upon exit assessment theory and pedagogy, placement assessment theory and pedagogical placement models, and validity scholarship. This section reviews validity research in three respects: It examines how the focused DCM constructivist content validity inquiry was adapted from the traditional concept of content validity; it provides a rationale for revising the traditional concept of content validity to conform to rhetorical, social constructivist principles; and it explains how the concept of a constructivist content validity inquiry accounts for the consequences of placement assessment decisions.

In this focused validation argument, a DCM constructivist validity inquiry expands upon the term “content validity” because in traditional, psychometric terms, content validity referred to how well a test represented curricular objectives and knowledge. Scholars have long demonstrated the limited scope of content validity. Elliot (2005) explained that the first set of assessment standards, the 1954 Technical Recommendations for Psychological Tests and Diagnostic Techniques, defined “content validity” as “how well the content of the test samples…subject matter” (p. 267). Likewise, Samuel Messick (1988, p. 38; 1989, p. 7) asserted that “content validity” referred to experts’ judgments of how well a test’s “content” represents the substance of a “domain” of knowledge (p. 38). According to the more recent American Educational Research Association’s Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (1999), “evidence based on test content” establishes “content validity” (p. 174), which measures
the “content domain” or curricular knowledge (p. 12). Similarly, Huot (2002) explained that “content validity” referred to “the domain of knowledge, ability, or trait being measured” (p. 48).

Messick (1995) argued that validity cannot be established by one particular aspect of validity, such as “traditional content validity” (p. 5). Messick (1988, p. 5; 1995, p. 33) has advocated a “unified view of validity” which emphasizes the “overall evaluative judgment founded on empirical evidence and theoretical rationales, of the adequacy and appropriateness of inferences and actions based on test scores.” Likewise, the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (1999) stated that “validity is a unitary concept” in which “all the accumulated evidence supports the intended interpretation of test scores for the proposed purpose” (p. 11). Huot (2002) also advocated that aspects of validity be “unified.” He explained that measurement and validity specialists have been arguing that particular forms of validity, such as “criterion,” “construct,” and “content” validity, are now combined into “a unified version of validity” (p. 49). He insisted that the purpose of viewing validity as a unified concept “was to prohibit the parceling out of validity piecemeal to allow partial claims for the validity of an assessment” (p. 49). Echoing Messick, Huot argued that scholars would not be able to claim a valid assessment based upon only one aspect of validity, such as content validity.

However, this study was designed to present a clear, concise, and focused validity argument based upon only one aspect of validity--constructivist content validity--which is supported by the theory of complementarity and CWA. The purpose of this DCM study is not to validate several aspects of the 2006 GSW Placement Program, in the spirit of Smith’s longitudinal validation inquiry of the placement program at the University of Pittsburgh, because more evidence (including student performances) and time would be needed for such a comprehensive analysis (see O’Neill, 2003, for a case-study of William L. Smith’s placement
model, which is based upon multiple types of validation evidence). Despite his argument for “validity as a unified concept” and his assertion that “content considerations are only one-directional in import” (Messick, 1988, p. 39), Messick (1995) explained that validity can still be “differentiated into distinct aspects to underscore issues and nuances that might otherwise be downplayed or overlooked,” which helps scholars concentrate on the “functional aspects of validity” and “disentangle some of the complexities” involved in validity studies (p. 5).

The main objective of this DCM study is not that of traditional content validity, to study and validate the substance of the 2006 GSW online writing placement test, but to examine the 2006 GSW Placement Program’s constructivist, rhetorical, CWA placement practices based upon the theory of complementarity, the validation of a comprehensive writing assessment through democratic debate (Broad & Boyd, 2005, p. 13). Consequently, this DCM adaptation presents a focused constructivist content validity inquiry and validation argument based upon a hermeneutics approach.

The phrase “constructivist content validity inquiry” refers to this dissertation’s adaptation of the traditional, psychometric, limited concept of content validity to conform to social constructivist writing assessment principles and CWA. By emphasizing constructivist content validity, this study examines to what extent the constructivist CWA practices and values of the GSW Placement Coordinator and placement evaluators—as evident in placement materials; training sessions; and most importantly, live evaluation sessions—invoked the writing program’s curricular values or criteria. Using a hermeneutics approach to writing assessment, this study brings together a diverse “collection of available evidence” (Moss, 1994, p. 7) (e.g., placement materials, training sessions, and evaluation sessions)—grounded in the “whole” social context
(Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994, p. 286) of a knowledgeable “community of interpreters” (e.g., GSW placement evaluators) (Moss, 1994, p. 7)—in support of a focused validation argument.

With respect to a hermeneutics approach to writing assessment, this DCM validation study integrates diverse, socially contextualized pieces of evidence concerning the 2006 GSW Placement Program’s CWA model—taped training and evaluation sessions and program documents—into a holistic, integrative interpretation of the Placement Program’s constructivist content validity. A hermeneutics approach to assessment appeals to Messick, Huot, and the Standards emphasis on validity as a unified concept, an approach which invokes Messick’s (1988, p. 5; 1995, p. 33) call for an “overall evaluative judgment.”

Regarding an holistic hermeneutical evaluation, Moss (1994) explained that while the psychometric approach analyzes the “parts,” or individual pieces of evidence, a hermeneutics approach analyzes the “whole,” or more specifically, the “entire collection of available evidence” (p. 7). Moss argued that a hermeneutic approach emphasizes “holistic, integrative interpretations of collected performances” (p. 7). Examining the contextual relationships between the parts and the whole leads to the mapping of individual criterion-clusters with other criterion-clusters to form individual constellations and an entire Dynamic Criteria Map—a process that reflects a hermeneutics analysis (see Chapter Four’s “Figure 1: English 110 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 105; “Figure 2: English 111 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 106; and “Figure 3: English 112 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 107). Broad explained that his study was based upon a hermeneutics framework (2000, pp. 248-249), and he proclaimed that composition experts can now assess writing “equipped with tools (qualitative inquiry) and attitudes (hermeneutics)” (2003, p. 137).

This DCM study’s adaptation of the traditional concept of content validity to study CWA practices situated in a constructivist, hermeneutic framework can be justified by precedent.
More specifically, revising validity theory terminology has been common practice in recent years. Broad (2003) explained that “validity has become more broadly and more multiply defined” (p. 10). In fact, Lynne (2004) rejected the terms “validity” or “reliability” altogether because “those terms are inseparable from the objectivist paradigm that has dominated their use for nearly a century” (p. 112). She insisted that such terms have not been able to free compositionists of the limitations of educational measurement, objectivist, psychometric assessment approaches, and in the spirit of her book’s title Coming to Terms, she proposed two new terms---“meaningfulness” and “ethics”---to replace “validity” and “reliability” (see Lynne’s “Chapter 6: Theorizing Writing Assessment,” pp. 113-141, for a full discussion of “meaningfulness” and “ethics”). In particular, she criticized Huot’s (2002) attempt to redefine or (re)articulate current validity theory by reconciling writing assessment theory with educational measurement theory (pp. 115-116). Huot (2002) had (re)articulated and revised how prominent composition scholars, such as White, defined validity and reliability. However, Lynne (2004) argued for a “new set of principles, not simply a re-configuration or a re-articulation of the old ones” (p. 115).

Nevertheless, this constructivist content validity inquiry is aligned with Huot’s (2002) social constructivist principles and provides an example of a validity concept that emerged out of a need to study the CWA evaluative practices of the GSW Placement Program. Returning to Lynne’s argument, Lee Nickson-Massey (2006) observed that Huot’s work on validity and reliability was more nuanced than Lynne’s portrayal suggests, for Huot did consider social constructivist composition theory with respect to validity and reliability. Likewise, Carl Whithaus (2005) explained that Lynne’s critique treated Huot’s work and other socially contextualized assessment practices as less significant than they actually have been. In
particular, he argued that current terms in composition theory, such as validity, have changed with the field: “Validity is changing into a concept that not only can but must acknowledge the situation in which a given composition or series of compositions are produced” (p. 217).

Whithaus argued that new terminology should materialize from current composition pedagogy (p. 217); therefore, a constructivist content validity inquiry is another example of an adapted validity concept.

The concept of a DCM constructivist content validity is aligned with contemporary scholars’ view that assessment validity must account for the consequences of placement assessment decisions. Broad (2003) argued that assessment validity is “a quality of the decisions people make” (p. 10). Likewise, Huot (2002) explained that validity involves both the test results and the “decisions that are based on a test--how they impact students, teachers and educational programs” (p. 178). He held that assessment procedures must be validated with “theoretical rationales and empirical evidence” in order “that the decisions based upon our assessment have real educational value for our programs’ teachers and students” (p. 178). This DCM study focused on the adequacy or appropriateness of the 2006 GSW Placement Program’s evaluative judgments. This DCM study determined to what extent the Placement Program’s placement test, materials, and most importantly, evaluators’ CWA placement practices exhibited constructivist content validity, and the study presented a focused validation argument to increase the validity of the placement program’s evaluative judgments and consequences.

White, like Broad and Huot, has examined the social, political, and educative consequences of placement decisions. White (1989, 1994, 1995, 2005a) has called on institutions to enact local, contextualized placement programs that reflect and support writing curriculums while warning against and admonishing political and social forces that seek to
undermine such constructivist, placement practices. White (2005a) recently declared that although he has long supported placement testing, he no longer has faith in most current placement testing practices because they have been “political” instead of “academic” activities (p. 27). He insisted that writing program administrators, teachers, and students have been continually subjected to “ill-conceived, poorly constructed, and misused assessments” due to the efforts of politicians and testing corporations (p. 22). National placement measures and many local placement programs focus on “testing” as a “sorting mechanism” rather than focusing on “learning and teaching” (p. 27). (Refer to Chapter Five’s “Political Impediments and DCM Implementation Strategies,” pp. 183-191, for White’s discussion of political and corporate obstacles to local placement assessment measures.)

White’s (2005a) recent fervent criticism of placement measures stems from his view that institutions of higher education have failed to enact and validate local, socially contextualized placement procedures; therefore, he called on educators to authenticate the educational benefits of local placement procedures through “validity inquiry” and programmatic self-assessment (p. 28). White proclaimed that “it will be a bold institution indeed willing to budget its own placement procedures, for its own students, in the face of the scores that will be arriving at no additional cost to the college” by way of the College Board and American College Testing Service’s holistically-scored, impromptu essays (p. 30).

White (1996) had pointed out earlier that most placement tests had “negative effects on students” because these placement tests tended to be political sorting mechanisms that “have little to do with the curriculum” of writing programs (p. 12). White had argued that placement tests should be “driven by the curriculum” and should divide students into “homogenous groups” into that curriculum (p. 12). Similarly, Royer and Gilles (2002) explained that placements must
be “future-directed” (p. 268), for “the best placement” method employed (whether it is portfolios, timed impromptus, or directed self-placement methods) depends upon how effectively it assists students in enrolling in the courses they need for success in a given writing curriculum (p. 271). White (1995) explained that a college placement exam should provide information that will assist administrators in guiding students into the writing courses where they can thrive (p. 33). Suitable placement tests and writing program curriculums must be clearly interrelated, connected, and defined (White, 1989, pp. 118-119). In other words, students require academic support, and the curriculum needed to support them must be distinct (p. 118).

Over the years, White consistently argued that placement testing should provide students with a writing curriculum in which they can succeed (1989, p. 142; 1994, pp. 194-195). White held that “placement tests exist to turn potential losers into winners” (1989, p. 120; 1994, pp. 194-195). White has provided empirical evidence to support the need for placement testing with respect to the basic writing curriculum, and ultimately, student retention. White summarized two follow-up studies from the 1980s concerning California and New Jersey’s statewide placement exams. These studies demonstrated that students who took placement tests and were guided into appropriate developmental or basic writing courses had higher retention or “persistence” rates than those students who did not take the placement tests and enrolled in regular writing courses (1989, p. 142; 1994, p. 193; 2001b, pp. 24-26).

As White’s scholarship illustrates, a validity inquiry must consider the relationship between placement assessment practices and corresponding curriculums; therefore, this constructivist validity inquiry examined the relationship between the 2006 GSW Placement Program’s evaluative CWA practices and the writing program’s curriculum and provided a focused, validation argument to strengthen this connection. With respect to the connection
between CWA practices and the curriculum, Broad (2003) argued that in order for a writing
assessment to be valid, “it must judge students according to the same skills and values by which
they have been taught” (p. 11). To rephrase Broad’s words in light of this DCM validity inquiry,
in order for a placement assessment to be valid, “it must judge students according to the same
skills and values by which they will [italics added] be taught.”

O’Neill (2006) argued that in placement assessment, specialists must articulate what
“abilities and attributes are being tested” and how “these relate to the composition curriculum
and course structure” (p. 7). Similarly, Moss (1998) explained that in addition to examining
scores, or the “meaningfulness of placement decisions,” the program’s course goals,
assignments, and learning outcomes, must also be investigated, for “in the absence of evidence
about the meaning of test scores and nature of instruction, it is not possible to fully understand
(or document) the reason for this relationship” (p. 117). To put it pointedly, O’Neill (2003)
explained that the validation of a placement test involves examining the “adequacy” of the
assessment to determine if students are being appropriately placed into courses; “adequate
placement” means that “teachers will be able to better meet the needs of students” (p. 50). She
recognized that placement assessment must be informed by course assessment and outcomes (p.
51), and she concluded that placement assessment programs cannot be sustained or improved in
the absence of “appropriate validation inquiry” (p. 62).

This dissertation’s appropriate validation inquiry, a DCM constructivist validity inquiry,
is situated within three generations of DCM research models, which have focused on the
implementation of exit and outcomes-based assessment measures. Adapted from expert
placement models, validity theory, and recent DCM applications, this dissertation study grew out
of social constructivist theory and rhetorical CWA evaluative practices. In the next section,
current DCM research models are reviewed to provide context for this DCM study. Although DCM had not yet been employed in a placement assessment context, this DCM adaptation incorporated CWA practices of current DCM applications.

The First Three Generations of DCM Applications

Broad’s (2003) initial methodological framework has produced a variety of current, ongoing DCM applications. Broad (personal communication, October 6, 2006) argued that his DCM study represented the first generation of DCM, and that DCM applications adapted directly from his book, such as those by Jane Detweiler, Maureen McBride, and Doug Walls; Susanmarie Harrington and Scott Weeden; Linda Adler-Kassner and Heidi Estrem; Barry Alford; Joel Haefner; and Donald Chinn, characterized the second generation of DCM. Broad asserted that this dissertation study represents the beginning of the third generation of DCM methodologies because this DCM inquiry benefited from second generation adaptations of the DCM research model. Through the sharing of conference papers and unpublished drafts, this study incorporated elements of these second generation applications.

The initial critical reception of Broad’s (2003) first generation DCM research model was primarily positive and optimistic, but some reviewers and scholars failed to anticipate the full potential of second and third generation DCM applications. Several reviewers saw DCM as a positive or negative alternative assessment method, separate from rubrics or other assessment measures, and they set up the DCM research model and the rubric as a false binary. In other words, some reviewers saw criteria mapping as one assessment option and rubrics as another. Actually, Broad criticized the misuse of the traditional rubric, which had encouraged standardization and discouraged CWA practices historically, not the rubric as an assessment tool.
Broad explained that scoring rubrics used to assess exit proficiency often sought the positivist, anti-rhetorical principles of “standardization” and “agreement” while remedying “the problem of disagreement” among readers (pp. 4-9). However, Broad asserted that the current constructivist paradigm supports collaboration and interpretation among teachers in obtaining the “rhetorical truth” rather than “the grail of inter-rater agreement” (p. 8). In light of the current “interpretive and qualitative paradigm,” Broad developed DCM to “engage readers in questions of truth in program-wide writing assessment” (p. 15) and ultimately produce a document, such as the Dynamic Criteria Map, more detailed than a traditional rubric which “documents only a small fraction of the rhetorical values” (p. 12). Recent DCM applications have demonstrated that DCM may produce nontraditional rubrics or alternative assessment tools.

Nevertheless, White argued that Broad’s (2003) work casts the rubric as the “villain,” an “evil” that DCM would displace (2004b, p. 284); moreover, White asserted that Broad presents DCM “as a substitute for the usual scoring rubrics in essay readings” (2004a, p. 115). Lisa Johnson (2004) likened DCM to a “trademarkable product,” which was not any better than traditional research methods (p. 184). Durst (2006, p. 94) claimed that Broad argues that writing programs should not develop rubrics, and William Carpenter (2004, p. 2) contended that Broad’s work is an indictment of “traditional rubrics.” In addition, John Strauchl (2004) asserted that Broad urges us to abandon “the simplistic world of rubric assessment” in favor of DCM (p. 202). John Eliason (2004) argued that DCM offers “a compelling and useful alternative method of writing assessment.” Larry Beason (2005) contended that DCM is an “alternative model of assessment,” based upon current viewpoints in rhetoric and composition, which can be customized for use “in most, if not all, composition programs” (p. 115). He even maintained that Broad’s (2003) work advocates the rejection of “rubrics in large-scale evaluations of writing” (p.
Kalikoff (2004) went as far as saying that DCM is a “claim for alternative twenty-first-century assessment” (p. 552).

Some reviewers, however, saw less of a distinction between DCM and rubrics. Miles Myers (2003) argued that DCM is a “new rubric” which emphasizes “test validity and the communal practices” in assessment. Myers believed that DCM promotes “experimentation with many kinds of rubrics.” Similarly, Pat Belanoff and Harry Denny (2006, p. 135) explained that Broad’s (2003) work “begins to create a rubric that will be applicable only within the context in which it is created” (p. 135). Never once mentioning the phrase “Dynamic Criteria Mapping,” Belanoff and Denny argued that Broad provides guidelines for developing a rhetorical “local rubric” (p. 134): “Broad demonstrates for us how to best create rubrics for use in assessment at an individual campus” (p. 135).

Many of these reviewers seemed to overlook that DCM is not the assessment tool, and a Dynamic Criteria Map is not the end product of all DCM endeavors. DCM is a research method educators have employed to design assessment measures, which may include a Dynamic Criteria Map as an assessment tool, but not necessarily. Second generation DCM applications at the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis (IUPUI), and Eastern Michigan University (EMU) have blurred this supposed boundary between maps and rubrics, for their assessment tools grew naturally out of the DCM process. Jane Detweiler, Maureen McBride, and Doug Walls (2006) discussed the creation of a “non-traditional” star-shaped rubric at UNR; Susanmarie Harrington and Scott Weeden (2006) detailed the evolution of the “unrubric” at IUPUI; and Linda Adler-Kassner and Heidi Estrem (2006) employed a “tripartite rating tool” for assessment. In each instance, assessment tools
evolved from the DCM process; the studies at UNR, IUPUI, and EMU have foregrounded how assessment tools grew out of communal, DCM-based methodologies.

Detweiler, the Director of the Core Writing Program at UNR, McBride, and Walls (2006) collected data to reveal what instructors valued in evaluating students’ writing assignments for English 102 (a required course in the Core Curriculum Program) and to help instructors consider their own values about teaching. Through the use of DCM-inspired focus groups, teacher surveys, discussions, and articulation sessions, Detweiler, McBride, Walls, graduate students, and instructors collaboratively and communally designed a non-traditional rubric in the shape of a star, a rubric they created to respond to and evaluate student writing. In addition, Detweiler, McBride, and Walls used authentic student writing in DCM focus groups to help instructors articulate and reflect on how their values about writing influenced their English 102 course assignments, learning outcomes, and teaching practices.

Harrington and Weeden (2006), writing program administrators at IUPUI, discussed how their “grading guideline” or “unrubric,” a fusion of criteria mapping and the rubric, evolved from their DCM endeavor involving portfolio assessment. Harrington and Weeden conducted DCM-centered articulation sessions and group discussions with teachers to produce maps of what they really valued about student portfolios in English W131, a first-year composition course. However, because of instructors’ fondness for rubrics, what grew out of these teacher-centered sessions was the “grading guideline” or “unrubric,” an evaluation guide that combined the descriptive qualities of mapping with the more linear structure of the rubric. The “unrubric,” which instructors began using at the beginning of the 2005-2006 academic year, is a “guide” that provides subtle, nuanced gradations of “low,” “medium,” and “high” quality indicators for portfolio assessment.
Adler-Kassner and Estrem (2006), writing program administrators at EMU, and students, faculty, and staff collaboratively developed a “tripartite rating tool” to assess students’ portfolios for English 121: Composition II, a second semester, first-year composition course. To identify the characteristics of “good writing,” Adler-Kassner and Estrem employed DCM focus groups and criteria mapping sessions with students, faculty, and staff across the disciplines. As a result, Adler-Kassner and Estrem and the first-year writing program faculty implemented the “tripartite rating tool.” In assessing English 121 portfolios, this three-part tool called on faculty to describe, rate, and respond to “qualities associated with ‘good writing’” in the writers’ collected pieces. This assessment tool asked instructors to respond to portfolios based upon the “descriptors” of “good writing” that grew out of the DCM sessions.

At UNR, IUPUI, and EMU, nontraditional assessment tools, which emphasized educators’ rhetorical values, emerged naturally from intensive, DCM-inspired inquiries. In some DCM endeavors, such as Barry Alford’s (2005) study at the Mid Michigan Community College (MMCC), a Dynamic Criteria Map emerged as the primary evaluative tool. Therefore, reviewers early portrayal of mapping and rubrics in a false binary has proven inaccurate, for the “star rubric,” “unrubric,” and “tripartite rating tool” illustrate how the DCM process has been used to design and/or enhance rubrics and other assessment tools in locally-driven, constructivist, communal research endeavors.

Although this study and recent applications have adapted DCM to suit local assessment needs, a few reviewers assumed that writing program administrators would have to reproduce DCM in a large-scale, programmatic context to be successful and, therefore, viewed DCM as a labor-intensive, complex endeavor. Recent second generation applications have demonstrated that DCM projects, both large and small, can be undertaken successfully. White (2004b)
asserted that DCM demonstrates the intricate depth of assessment: “The scope and depth of
DCM is impressive and reminds us of the extraordinary complexity inherent in the writing we
presume to assess” (p. 285). Nevertheless, he concluded that to “keep the complexity of the
[DCM] model alive” would be “rather daunting” (2004b, p. 284), and DCM is “impractically
complicated” (2004a, p. 115). Johnson (2004) believed Broad’s research model would entail
“too much work” for writing program administrators (p. 184-185), a model that would be more
useful for “fledgling researchers” or “researcher wanna-bes,” who would value Broad’s (2003)
thorough discussion of qualitative research methods (p. 182).

Kalikoff (2004) asserted that Broad’s descriptions of his methods “are too intricate to
summarize here but involved many discussions, meetings, decisions, and enough transcription to
break the human spirit” (p. 552). Eliason (2004) said “anxiety crept in” when he thought about
“the time and effort it would take…to do the sort of excellent work Broad has done” in view of
Broad’s claim that such an investment would be “modest” (p. 119). Finally, Carpenter (2004)
described DCM as “calisthenics” and “physical labor”--a “multidimensional task” that is
academically challenging. While Carpenter (2004) portrayed Broad’s study as a “workout,” he
argued that DCM “promises a stronger and better defined method of assessment”; he explained
that Broad’s qualitative model is “clear, focused, and practical” and sensitive to the “social
processes” of teachers assessing writing. Likewise, Beason (2005) explained that DCM is
“challenging” yet “accessible and useful” (p. 116).

Although these reviewers assumed exact replications of Broad’s (2003) work, DCM’s
theoretical and methodological frameworks can be adapted in both large- and small-scale
assessment contexts. Lynne (2004) argued that “it matters less if institutions adopt Broad’s
specific procedures for DCM than it does that we have seen the potential for examining the
substance of our assessments” (p. 160). (Refer to Lynne, 2004, pp. 97-99, pp. 152-153, and pp. 159-160, for her appraisal of Broad’s research model.) The recent DCM applications at Illinois Wesleyan University, MMCC, and the University of Washington, Tacoma, have demonstrated that DCM studies can be as extensive as, more extensive than, or less extensive than Broad’s (2003) original DCM study of the first-year writing program at City University. For instance, Haefner (2006), the Writing Coordinator and a Lecturer in Computer Science, recently described institutional applications of DCM at Illinois Wesleyan University to revise the freshman composition program’s assessment mechanisms and put into practice “an outcomes-based assessment of student writing.”

On a more extensive scale, Alford (2005), the Faculty Director of Assessment at MMCC, worked with faculty “to build an assessment model based on their values” concerning writing in all of the college’s courses--an intensive, ongoing, writing across the curriculum, programmatic assessment endeavor. Under the direct guidance of Broad, the MMCC faculty communally produced approximately 200 responses articulating what they valued in collected samples of students’ writing assignments. As a result of this activity, “three areas of concentration”--“Working from Multiple Perspectives,” “Application,” and “Communication and Presentation Skills”--emerged as the three principal circles of MMCC’s Dynamic Criteria Map. As a result, faculty members across the disciplines have collaborated to develop a “common evaluation strategy” based upon this Dynamic Criteria Map, which they use to evaluate writing and to discuss assessment criteria with their students. Alford explained that the Dynamic Criteria Map has been used for assessment at both the program and instructional levels: the institutional Dynamic Criteria Map has been applied directly to classroom instruction and assessment.
Classroom-based DCM has also been undertaken and can provide a small-scale DCM application in view of Alford’s (2005) extensive, university-wide DCM project. According to Broad (2003), “classroom-based DCM” is the “method for documenting and reflecting on an instructor’s evaluative framework” in which students gather and provide data to reveal what their instructors really value in evaluating their writing (pp. 135-136). Chinn (2006) reported that Broad employed classroom DCM in his “Computer, Ethics, and Society Class” at the University of Tacoma, Washington. Chinn explained, “Broad does not expect all of us to perform the same kind of intensive analysis and create the elaborate map he did.” Chinn described the procedures for classroom-based DCM conducted in his class. First, students review written comments on papers. Second, they are asked to “come up with values they think the comments express” communally, which are recorded. Third, the instructor reviews the recorded values to find themes and categories. Finally, in a later class period, the instructor discusses the students’ values to “reinforce course objectives” and “allow students to have a voice in the way the class proceeds.” In general, DCM can be employed over a few class periods, a much smaller DCM application than most program- or university-wide assessments would entail.

As evident in these recent second wave applications, the greatest strength of DCM has been that it allows flexibility in methodological design with respect to institutional context. Nevertheless, Broad’s study has been criticized for its perceived lack of guidance and objectivity. Johnson (2004) argued that Broad neither adequately analyzes the rhetorical values nor discusses venues for revising or creating writing programs (p. 182), and Beason (2005) suggested that Broad’s study may be perceived as subjective and more susceptible to criticism because the criteria generated demand more comprehensive, meticulous support than a rubric would require (p. 118). However, Belanoff and Denny (2006) argued that Broad “demonstrates
how evanescent and particularized evaluation is,” for the assessment process Broad studied “is subjective” (p. 135).

Broad purposively did not provide a universal methodological blueprint; such a blueprint would have stifled the local, socially-constructed, second generation DCM applications. He has demonstrated that criticism and subjectivity are both welcome in CWA practices, for the validity of any assessment is grounded in the articulated, value-based, evaluative decisions of those invested in the assessment process. Lynne (2004) argued that “Broad’s method highlights… disagreements so that a [writing] program can decide how to manage them” (p. 153). In the undergraduate capstone course “Evaluating Writing” at Rowan University, Penrod and Deb Martin (2006) teach Broad’s work to emphasize the deliberative, rhetorical, subjective, contextual nature of the criteria employed in writing assessments: “Through Broad, we find our students come to know that criteria are dynamic and variable depending upon the audiences, purposes, genres and markets that shape a text” (p. 69).

Penrod (2005) argued that DCM promotes a “deep assessment approach,” a qualitative assessment approach grounded in the particular local “artifacts” (e.g., texts, data, comments, interviews, notes, et cetera) of an institution (p. 99). With respect to the assessment of new media texts, Penrod called on compositionists to employ DCM to “articulate” their values in assessing e-texts within their localized assessment contexts (p. 107). Therefore, this dissertation study provides another locally-designed DCM assessment model, a deep assessment methodology for conducting a constructivist validity inquiry, based upon the first two generations of DCM applications and sensitive to institutional context.

Whereas Chapter Two provided the rationale for the appropriateness of studying the constructivist content validity of the 2006 GSW Placement Program, based upon current theory
and pedagogy in exit and placement assessment, “Chapter Three: Overview of the Study” provides an overview of the specific research site and initial methodology of this dissertation study. For that reason, Chapter Three’s “Setting of the Study,” pp. 52-64, offers specific details concerning my role as an ethnographer (see the section “Participant-Observer Ethnographer,” pp. 53-56); surveys the writing program’s contemporary and historical context (see the section “Historical Overview…,” pp. 57-58); describes the program’s placement model and online writing placement test (see the section “GSW Online Placement…,” pp. 59-62); and explains the program’s current placement procedures (see the section “Placement Procedures,” pp. 62-64).

Concerning the study’s initial methods, Chapter Three’s “Study,” pp. 64-83, presents an overview of the pilot study and initial principal and supporting research questions (see the section “Pilot Study and Research Questions,” pp. 65-71 and “Appendix A: Pilot Study,” pp. 213-267); summarizes the study’s participants and research instruments (see the section “Methodology,” pp. 71-82); and provides an overview of the Dynamic Criteria Mapping data analysis procedures used in the pilot study and “Chapter Four: Study Findings and Analysis” (see the section “Dynamic Criteria Mapping as Data Analysis,” pp. 82-83).
CHAPTER THREE: OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The purpose of “Chapter Three: Overview of the Study” is to provide the methodology for the implementation of the dissertation’s central claim in the study: Broad’s (2003) DCM research model can be adapted to provide a focused validation argument to strengthen the 2006 GSW Placement Program’s constructivist content validity, the relationship between the Placement Program’s communal writing assessment (CWA) practices and the writing program’s curriculum. Chapter Three demonstrates this claim by providing the study’s setting and historical context (“Setting of the Study,” pp. 52-64) and the study’s research questions and methodology (“Study,” pp. 64-83) based upon the pilot study (“Appendix A: Pilot Study,” pp. 213-267).

The four sections of the “Setting of the Study” provide an overview of my role as the principal researcher in the study and background information concerning the research study site. The first section (“Participant-Observer Ethnographer,” pp. 53-56) defines my role as a participant-observer ethnographer in the study and explains my motivations for conducting DCM research in the GSW program. The second section (“Historical Overview…,” pp. 57-58) provides the setting and historical context of the dissertation study with respect to the writing program’s exit and placement assessment practices. The third section (“GSW Online Placement…,” pp. 59-62) describes the program’s current placement model and online writing placement test. The fourth section (“Placement Procedures,” pp. 62-64) outlines the program’s current evaluative procedures for placing essays into the program’s course sequence: English 110, English 111, and English 112.
The three sections of the “Study” demonstrate how the study’s methodology was designed to address the principal and supporting research questions, which emerged from the pilot study inquiry. The first section (“Pilot Study and Research Questions,” pp. 65-71) provides an overview of the pilot study and principal and supporting research questions. (For specific details regarding how the pilot study informed the study’s initial research questions and methodology, see “Appendix A: Pilot Study,” pp. 213-267.) The second section (“Methodology,” pp. 71-82) presents a synopsis of the study’s research participants and the specific research instruments created to triangulate data from the 2006 GSW Placement Program Participants, the 2006 GSW Instructor Participants, the 2006 BGSU Student Participants, and the Former and Current GSW Instructor Participants. The third section (“Dynamic Criteria Mapping as Data Analysis,” pp. 82-83) provides an overview of the Dynamic Criteria Mapping data analysis procedures used in the pilot study and “Chapter Four: Study Findings and Analysis.”

After an initial, informal analysis of the data collected from the four groups of research participants, the principal and supporting research questions were later narrowed and refocused for the final, formal data analysis discussed in Chapter Four. (Refer to Chapter Four’s sections “Data Collection Procedures,” pp. 86-87 and the “Focused Data Sets and Research Questions,” pp. 87-94, for a discussion of the rationale for the final research methodology, focused data sets, and principal and supporting research questions.)

Setting of the Study

The following sections outline the setting of the study. The section “Participant-Observer Ethnographer,” pp. 53-56, reveals how my involvement in the writing program influenced my role as the principal researcher and motivations for conducting the research. The section “Historical Overview…,” pp. 57-58, discusses how over the past half century, the program’s exit
and placement assessment models shifted from objectivist, indirect assessment practices to the social constructivist, direct evaluation of writing. The section “GSW Online Placement…,” pp. 59-62, explains the advent and application of the program’s current online placement assessment model, which better reflects the program’s pedagogical practices. The section “Placement Procedures,” pp. 62-64, provides a summary of how evaluators recently placed essays into the program’s course sequence.

**Participant-Observer Ethnographer**

Cindy Johanek (2000) advised researchers to ask the following question: “How do I want to be perceived as a researcher in the final presentation” (p. 112)? In the study, I was a participant-observer with previous intuitions, knowledge, and experiences about placement evaluation practices in the first-year writing program at BGSU. My motivations for conducting the dissertation’s DCM study grew out of both my involvement with and observations of these evaluative practices. Janice Lauer and J. William Asher (1988) explained that the role of the participant-observer is not unusual; however, participant-observers must clarify the perspectives they bring to the study’s setting (p. 42). Because they belong to the settings of their studies, researchers’ perspectives play a crucial role in the study’s environment (pp. 39, 42).

This study was situated within a well-established, independent writing program. At the 2006 Conference on College Composition and Communication, Donna Nelson-Beene (2006), the Director of GSW, explained that the program has been independent since 2001. She pointed out that the program, which currently serves approximately 4,000 undergraduates each semester, has an independent budget, 40 full-time instructors, an Assistant Director, and an Associate Director. According to Abigail Cloud (2006), a full-time instructor, the program has offered multiple venues for professional development for graduate teaching assistants, part-time faculty, and full-
time instructors in the program. The program has provided summer orientation sessions, professional development meetings, online resources, and retreats for instructors. The program has encouraged instructors to develop teaching portfolios, teach writing courses for university learning communities, and serve on internal program committees involving textbook selection, the development of the online placement test, and the review of instructors’ merit files.

As an insider, I brought particular perspectives to the study--perspectives informed by three years of involvement in the writing program. I served as a placement evaluator for the Summer 2005 GSW Placement Program, a member of the 2006 GSW Placement Prompt Committee, the Assistant Placement Coordinator for the 2006 GSW Placement Program, an Assistant to the Director of GSW during the 2005-06 academic year, and a GSW instructor from 2003 to 2005. As a placement evaluator for the 2005 Placement Program, I collaborated with another evaluator to place essays into the writing program’s course sequence. I served on the 2006 Placement Prompt Committee with the program’s Associate Director and three full-time instructors to choose reading selections and write accompanying prompts for the Online Writing Placement Test for the 2006-07 academic year. (Refer to “Appendix D: 2006 Online Placement Test,” pp. 656-657, for the 2006 Online Writing Placement Test.) Working with the Placement Coordinator, I oversaw the day-to-day operations of the 2006 Placement Program; I assisted in training and calibration sessions; and I made final placement decisions as the Assistant Placement Coordinator for the placement program. During the 2005-06 academic school year, I served as an Assistant to the Director of GSW. I wrote, revised, and edited programmatic materials, such as manuals and teaching materials; I reviewed composition textbooks; and I provided administrative support for the program’s portfolio assessment process. Finally, I taught “English 111: Introductory Writing” and “English 112: Varieties of English” for the program.
Wendy Bishop (1999) verified that “ethnographic writing” is “participant-observer-based inquiry,” and consequently, the researcher “studies a culture from that culture’s point of view” (p. 35). Bishop explained that there are various “ethnographic data-gathering techniques”: the researcher must engage in fieldwork, gather numerous data sources, and formulate research questions based on the “context” of the participants in the study (p. 35). She implied that the role of the participant-observer is inherently political, for she argued that participant-observers must determine to what extent they will participate in the study and how their participation will assist or inhibit their observations (p. 75). More specifically, Bishop pointed out that the role of the “participant observer” elicits issues of “authority,” “power,” and “access” (p. 47).

As a participant-observer in the study, I drew upon my previous contextual knowledge to engage in Bishop’s “participative research” (p. 110). Bishop argued that “participative research” is a current research trend that helps guide the direction of methods such as interviews (p. 110). Lauer and Asher (1988) pointed out that participant-observers generate “thick descriptions” and comprehensive accounts of behavior in “rich context” based on their observations and data collection (p. 39). I utilized collaboration with past and future colleagues to guide me in piloting and designing the study. However, I also strived for neutrality to allow my colleagues to chart the course of my study. Andrea Fontana and James H. Frey (1994) insisted that researchers must assume a “neutral” role and not interpose their opinions with participants’ responses to interview questions (p. 650).

Although DCM has not been employed in a placement assessment context, this dissertation argues that DCM may be employed theoretically at any institution that utilizes placement evaluators situated in a communal, social constructivist, locally-contextualized, rhetorical placement model. Consequently, my motivation for conducting this study was to
provide the writing program with a qualitative and quantitative research model for discovering, understanding, and discussing what evaluators really valued in making actual placement decisions and to use this information to strengthen the constructivist content validity of the placement program. Although the current placement program model began in 2004, the writing program has not yet conducted a qualitative study of the placement program. For instance, in 2005, the Placement Coordinator monitored the Placement Program informally and wrote the annual “Placement Statistics” report, which included the “Placement Results” and “Pass/Fail Ratios and Grade Distributions.” By using DCM to conduct the first formal quantitative and qualitative study of the Placement Program’s current evaluative practices, this dissertation sets a precedent for using the DCM research model for future studies.

The writing program will decide whether or not to employ the study’s results to revise placement practices and values and/or to continue the DCM research. The dissertation discusses options for the publication and/or continued DCM research studies that would help determine the effectiveness of the placement program’s placement materials, training sessions, and articulation of the program’s entrance-level criteria and rhetorical values, and consequently, validate and/or revise placement practices and values. This study provides the GSW program with a qualitative and quantitative programmatic assessment tool for strengthening the constructivist content validity of placement practices. Most importantly, the study facilitates the revision of any program that has incorporated social constructivist principles into its exit and placement assessment models. (Refer to Chapter’s Five’s section “Implications for Further Research,” pp. 191-197, regarding possibilities for the publication, revision, and continued DCM research based upon this dissertation study, and the implications this study poses for researchers in the writing assessment field more generally.)
Historical Overview of GSW’s Exit and Placement Assessment Practices

The GSW program, an independent first-year writing program, underwent an historical, paradigmatic shift from objectivist models to social constructivist models (see “Chapter Two: Theoretical Rational for the DCM Research Model,” pp. 9-50, for a discussion of the paradigm shift from objectivist to constructivist exit and placement assessment models). The program’s exit assessment model shifted from an objectivist to constructivist exit assessment model. The program currently employs a standardized portfolio exit assessment process. Instructors employ exit proficiency standards to pass or fail portfolios--folders comprised of prewriting, drafts, and revised, final essays--from their colleagues’ classes. Portfolios that do not pass on the first reading are independently read at least one more but often two more times (General Studies Writing Program, Guide to Portfolio Assessment, 2006-07, pp. 6-7). Amy Rybak (2006), a full-time instructor and a former Assistant Director in the program, explained that the portfolio assessment process has promoted the professional development of instructors and has strengthened the bond between the program’s administrative and teaching assessment practices. Donna Nelson (1993) explained that in 1991, the portfolio assessment process replaced a proficiency exam, which was first administered in 1972, the year the program was created. The GSW program was the Freshman English Program before 1972. In order to pass each writing course, students were required to demonstrate proficiency on an exit essay, which they wrote on a Saturday near the end of the semester. Six hours was allotted for this exam although students did not have to make use of all six hours to write their proficiency essays (pp. 41-46).

During the last half of the twentieth century, models for placing students into composition courses at the university moved from a dependence on indirect, objective, assessment measures to a reliance on direct, constructivist, authentic writing samples. During
the late 1950s and early 1960s, students were placed into the Freshman English composition
courses English 101 and English 102 according to their scores on the *New Purdue Placement Test in English*, their high school records, and a writing sample (English Department, 1959-60,
1960-61, 1961-62). The university began using the ACT for admissions in 1965 along with high
school transcripts, letters of recommendations, and high school ranks (Givens, 1986, p. 44).

By the early 1970s, students’ scores on the English Usage Section of the American
College Test (ACT) placed them into the current English 111 and English 112 courses; however,
instructors also gave students a “pre-test,” a timed writing assignment on the second day of class,
to collect writing samples from students (English Department, 1972-73, p. 1). GSW instructors
then used a pretest grid or rubric to score the writing samples in order to confirm or adjust
placements (English Department, 1972-73, pp. 6-7). However, George Hillocks (1971), the
coordinator of the Freshman English Program, had argued that the program’s use of ACT scores
to place students into composition courses was too arbitrary, and he proposed that students write
sample essays under supervised conditions during summer registration--essays which qualified
evaluators would then place into English 111 or English 112 (p. 1). Phyllis Eck (1992), a former
GSW program administrator, explained that “placement testing...began during the annual
summer pre-registration period of 1973” (pp. 56-57). By the mid 1970’s, students were placed
based solely upon a timed 40- to 60- minute writing sample (General Studies Writing Program,
1974). For the next two decades, the program abandoned indirect placement assessment
measures in favor of the most current direct placement assessment measure available at the time,
the impromptu placement essay, which White (1995) argued was still an appropriate assessment
measure for placement even in the mid-1990s.
GSW Online Placement Model

Most incoming students handwrote one-hour, impromptu essays for the writing program on campus during a five-week summer orientation period until 2004, when the writing program piloted the online writing placement test. (Students with special needs, however, have always been provided with additional time and/or resources to write placement essays.) However, composing and submitting essays online currently represents a contemporary placement assessment model. Huot (2002) explained that students now compose placement essays online, and readers access these essays through a secure portal (p. 140). Huot and Schendel (2002) explained that readers at Purdue University-Indianapolis (Indiana University) placed students into classes after reading students’ essays submitted online (p. 218). In fact, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), the University of Cincinnati, DePaul University, the California Institute of Technology, Clemson, Cornell, SUNY Stony Brook, Olin College, and Louisiana State University at Baton Rouge have been using the MIT Online Assessment Tool (iMOAT), a web service and database used for placement and exit assessments (Perelman, 2003). However, although iMOAT has been a collaborative endeavor, Perelman (2006) explained that this online platform has provided an assessment tool based upon local needs of the institution.

BSGU and GSW administrators opted to create their own local, independent, online placement test platform. The Associate Dean for Faculty, Resources, and Planning in the College of Arts and Sciences notified GSW on July 31, 2003, that the program must implement an online placement test. The GSW Director decided to create a new test that would be pedagogically “superior to the paper-and-pencil test,” and the online placement test was piloted in 2004 (Nelson-Beene, 2004). At the same time, the mathematics department designed and piloted an online placement test: “During the summer 2004 Orientation and Registration, both
the Math Placement Test and the Writing Placement Test was administered online” (Bowling Green State University Placement Test Committee, 2005, p. 3). The BGSU Online Placement Test Committee, a committee composed of program staff and representatives across the university, provided oversight for the design and implementation of the piloted writing and math online placement tests with respect to the university’s orientation and registration period.

For GSW’s piloted online placement writing test, students wrote essays in response to the paper-and-pencil impromptu prompts online. However, the program designed an entirely new test for the 2005 Placement Program. The GSW Placement Prompt Committee, an internal committee usually comprised of program administrators and instructors, met regularly to design a test that would provide students with articles, writing prompts, and a 24-hour period in which to write their essays. The program director explained that this new placement test provided a “pedagogically superior” model because it better reflected pedagogical practices of the program; prompts would be more specific, and students would have more time to write (Nelson-Beene, p. 2).

In addition to emphasizing the process approach to writing, the advent of the online placement test signaled a decisive move to a writing test that better emphasized persuasive writing—the heart of the GSW curriculum. With respect to the course sequence, “English 110: Developmental Writing” and “English 111: Introductory Writing” both foreground the “principles of academic arguments” with respect to expository writing. English 110, a five-hour semester course, provides more instruction in grammar, usage, and mechanics than English 111, a three-hour course. Once passing either English 110 or English 111, students enroll in English 112, a three-hour course. Required of all BGSU students, English 112 emphasizes “critical and

Over the past two decades, as the program gradually moved towards an emphasis on argumentative writing, placement prompts on the paper-and-pencil placement test moved from narrative to persuasive writing placement tasks; for instance, later versions of the handwritten placement test emphasized argumentative writing tasks, which paralleled course assignments in the course sequence. (Refer to “Appendix C: Sample Placement Essay Prompts,” p. 655, for prompts that moved toward argumentative writing tasks between 1981 and 2006.) Because the test allowed for students to read a piece of academic writing and respond to it, the online placement model provided an even more effective vehicle for the program’s pedagogy and curriculum.

The Placement Prompt Committee, which has met annually since 2004, is responsible for designing the online placement test; however, this study’s pilot inquiry studied the 2006 Placement Prompt Committee. (Refer to the section “Pilot Study and Research Questions,” pp. 65-71, and “Appendix A: Pilot Study,” pp. 213-267, for a thorough description of the pilot study.) During the Spring 2006 Semester, the Placement Prompt Committee--an internal GSW committee including the Placement Coordinator, three full-time instructors, and me--met four times to choose reading selections and write accompanying prompts for the 2006 online writing placement test. Each year the committee chooses new reading selections and creates new writing prompts for the placement test. Consequently, the committee collaboratively chose three articles (all articles were accessible through the university library’s online databases) and wrote nine prompts (each article had three accompanying prompts) for the test. Even though the committee chose and wrote prompts individually, committee members came together in the meetings to
choose the reading selections and revise writing prompts. On April 17, 2006, the online writing placement test (which the 2006 Placement Prompt Committee designed) went live, and students began logging in to take the test (see http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/orientation/page17784.html, “Online Placement Test Information,” for an overview of the test, and the 2006 Online Placement Test in “Appendix D: 2006 Online Placement Test,” pp. 656-657). Throughout the summer, the three articles and accompanying prompts rotated every two weeks.

With regard to this placement model, used in 2005 and 2006, students read a short academic article and wrote persuasive essays in response to one of three prompts at a secure, password protected, university website. Students were given 24 hours to write and submit their placement essays at this secure university website, and they could log in and out as many times as they liked within this time period. This 24-hour submission window encouraged students to use the process-approach in composing their essays (General Studies Writing Program, Placement Evaluators’ Handbook, 2006-07, pp. 28-30). The Online Placement Test Information website instructed students not to collaborate with anyone while writing their essays, for students’ writing samples needed to accurately reflect their actual writing proficiencies (Bowling Green State University Orientation and First Year Programs, Online Placement Test Information, 2006). Based upon this placement model, which called for persuasive, process-based essays, evaluators employed direct, holistic assessment procedures to evaluate writing samples to place students directly into a curriculum that values process writing and argumentation.

**Placement Procedures**

This dissertation studied placement readers’ evaluative decisions with regard to programmatic, placement procedures during the 2006 Placement Program’s two-month tenure—June 2006 through July 2006. The Placement Program used direct procedures and experienced
instructors grounded in communal, constructivist, evaluative procedures. Placement evaluators directly placed students into one of three courses: “English 110: Developmental Writing”; “English 111: Introductory Writing”; or “English 112: Varieties of English.” According to the “General Studies Placement Philosophy,” a standardized, indirect aptitude test like the ACT or SAT cannot adequately measure writing ability. As a result, evaluators did not use “arbitrarily scaled-level” lists, such as traditional holistic rubrics for placement, but evaluators directly placed students into “actual courses” (General Studies Writing Program, Placement Evaluators’ Handbook, 2006-07, p. 1). Students must directly demonstrate their writing abilities in their placement essays.

Although the Placement Coordinator, who oversaw the 2006 placement test design and Placement Program, revised the training materials and procedures for the placement program, evaluators placed essays collaboratively just as in past iterations of the paper-based placement tests. Eight teaching assistants, who had taught English 111 and English 112, placed essays directly into one of the first-year composition courses. The Placement Coordinator and I paired the placement evaluators after the training sessions. The annual GSW Placement Evaluators’ Handbook, 2006-07, detailed entrance-level textual features or criteria for each course, English 110, English 111, and English 112 (pp. 7-9). The Placement Coordinator instructed evaluators to consider these features before making placement decisions.

Placement evaluators independently placed essays and recorded placement decisions on Placement Note Sheets, and then the evaluators came back together in pairs to decide the placement for each essay in their packets. Placement evaluators came to a mutually shared, communal consensus for each placement. The placement evaluators received paper copies of the essays in manila folders from the Placement Coordinator and me. This reading process was
holistic only in the sense that the evaluators read the essays for overall impressions of writers’
writing proficiencies. After the evaluators finished reading and placing 15 essays, the evaluators
had to “compare and discuss their placement decisions for each essay,” decide upon placements,
and write their final, agreed-upon, placement decisions on each essay. Placement evaluators read
between 40 to 60 essays each day; evaluators read essays for four hours each day, four days each
week. During this daily process, evaluators use a “shared vocabulary for discussing placement
criteria and decisions” (p. 1). If evaluators could not agree on a placement, the Placement
Coordinator and/or I arbitrated the disagreement and made the final placement decision after
reading the essay a third time.

Overall, the “Setting of the Study” section, which sketched the context of the research,
principal researcher, and program, informed the study. Specifically, the “Setting of the Study”
examined how placement evaluators’ current assessment practices have been informed by the
historical evolution of the program’s exit and placement assessment models. The next section
introduces the study’s research questions and methodology, which grew out of the pilot study’s
examination of two key aspects of the current placement model—the design of the online writing
placement test and the assessment tendencies of placement evaluators.

Study

The following sections illustrate how the study’s methodology was designed to address
the principal and supporting research questions, which emerged from the pilot study inquiry.
The section “Pilot Study and Research Questions,” pp. 65-71, provides an overview of the
principal and supporting research questions and the pilot study that informed them; “Appendix
A: Pilot Study,” pp. 213-267, explains how the pilot study’s Dynamic Criteria Mapping analysis
led to these research questions. The section “Methodology,” pp. 71-82, presents a summary of
the study’s research participants and the specific research instruments created to triangulate data from the 2006 GSW Placement Program Participants, the 2006 GSW Instructor Participants, the 2006 BGSU Student Participants, and the Former and Current GSW Instructor Participants while taking into consideration Chapter Four’s revision of the research questions and analysis of the focused data sets. Finally, the section “Dynamic Criteria Mapping as Data Analysis,” pp. 82-83, previews the Dynamic Criteria Mapping data analysis procedures used in Chapter Four.

Pilot Study and Research Questions

During the Spring 2006 semester, a pilot study was conducted to provide a specific focus for this dissertation’s DCM study, or more specifically, to provide the study with research questions and instruments for executing the dissertation’s central claim: The DCM research model can be adapted to provide a focused validation argument to strengthen the 2006 GSW Placement Program’s constructivist content validity, the relationship between the placement program’s CWA practices and the program’s curriculum. “Appendix A: Pilot Study,” pp. 213-267, outlines how the pilot study revised the original research questions and fine-tuned the study’s adaptation of Broad’s (2003) DCM research model for the dissertation’s focused constructivist validity inquiry of the 2006 Placement Program (see “Appendix E: Original Study Methodology,” pp. 658-660, for the HSRB approved instruments that corresponded to the original principal and supporting research questions discussed below).

The six sections of “Appendix A: Pilot Study,” pp. 213-267, present an overview of the pilot study involving two groups of research participants: the 2006 GSW Placement Prompt Committee members and the 2005 GSW Placement Program evaluators and administrators. The appendix’s first section (“Objective,” pp. 213-216) presents the pilot study’s purpose: to revise the original research questions and provide a specific methodology for the study. The second
section (“Research Participants,” pp. 216-217) includes a description of the two groups of pilot study research participants. The third section (“Interview Procedures,” pp. 217-220) puts forth the pilot study’s data collection procedures and foci with respect to audio taping Placement Prompt Committee meetings and interviewing the 2006 GSW Placement Prompt Committee members and 2005 GSW Placement Program participants. (Because Placement Prompt Committee members were asked to discuss the rhetorical strategies and criteria they used in choosing reading selections and writing the prompts for the online placement test, refer to “Appendix F: Finding Articles and Writing Prompts,” p. 661, for the official criteria the committee used during the meetings to design the online writing test; refer to “Appendix G: Pilot Study Consent Forms and Interview Scripts,” pp. 662-670, for the HSRB approved interview scripts for both groups of participants.) The fourth section (“Data Analysis,” pp. 220-225) discusses the pilot study’s data analysis procedures--the Dynamic Criteria Mapping of the data collected from the 2006 Placement Prompt Committee participants and the thematic coding of the data collected from the 2005 Placement Program participants. The fifth section (“Results,” pp. 225-253) provides the pilot study results; based upon the pilot study outcomes, the sixth section (“Conclusions,” pp. 254-267) presents a rationale for the following principal and supporting research questions. Again, after an initial, informal analysis of the data collected from these research participants, however, the principal and supporting research questions were later refocused for the final, formal data analysis in Chapter Four. (Refer to Chapter Four’s “Focused Data Sets and Research Questions,” pp. 87-94, for a discussion of the rationale for the final principal and supporting research questions; and more specifically, refer to pp. 89-90 for a list of these refocused research questions.)
Principal Research Question

What rhetorical values will guide BGSU’s GSW Program placement evaluators in placing students into one of the first-year writing courses, English 110 (Developmental Writing), English 111 (Introductory Writing), or English 112 (Varieties of English), and to what extent will evaluators’ rhetorical values and placement decisions exhibit constructivist content validity?

Supporting Research Questions

1. Assuming that evaluative tendencies are both unarticulated and articulated, what will be the full range of placement readers’ rhetorical values—which may include both implicit, unspoken values, and explicit, spoken values—with regard to the curriculum? How will identifying evaluators’ rhetorical values articulate a fuller range of students’ writing skills within the course sequence—English 110, English 111, and English 112—and the range of students’ writing abilities within each individual course? How will identifying a fuller range of readers’ rhetorical values more clearly define the curricular boundaries between courses within the sequence?

2. How will temporal effects, or the passage of time, in the Placement Program affect readers’ rhetorical values and evaluative decisions with regard to the curriculum? Will evaluators consistently employ a wide range of normed, curricular criteria, or will they move away from evaluative tendencies based on curricular values, towards more idiosyncratic criteria or small distinctive subsets of values in making evaluative decisions over time?

3. What will be the constructivist content validity of individual and collaborative placement decisions? First, how will placement evaluators individually and collaboratively prioritize rhetorical values with respect to high- and low-order curricular concerns? Second, how
will the dynamic of the collaborative decision-making of paired placement evaluators influence rhetorical values and evaluative priorities with respect to the curriculum?

4. How and to what extent will the role of the Placement Coordinator and placement training and norming sessions influence the rhetorical values and evaluative tendencies of placement evaluators with respect to the curriculum? More specifically, to what extent will placement evaluators rely on the Placement Coordinator’s instructions and/or the curricular, entrance-level, textual criteria for placement as detailed in the GSW Placement Evaluators’ Handbook and training sessions? Overall, to what extent will the placement evaluation training and norming sessions influence actual placement decisions?

5. To what extent will readers rely upon their experiences and knowledge as teachers to guide their placement decisions? First, to what extent will placement evaluators rely upon Broad’s (2003) “contextual criteria,” which involves the “expert model” or Richard Haswell’s (1998, 2001a, 2001b) “exemplar” categorization in placement assessment? Second, to what extent will placement evaluators rely upon their recollections of the writing skills of former students in English 110, English 111, or English 112 to assess the writing skills exhibited in placement essays in making placement decisions?

6. To what extent will placement evaluators speculate about students’ writing abilities beyond the face value of their placement essays? First, to what extent will teaching experiences help placement evaluators see the entire range of students’ real rather than ideal writing abilities within each placement category (English 110, English 111, and English 112), and consequently, help define the beginning and end point of each category within the curriculum? Second, to what extent will placement evaluators rely upon Broad’s (2003) “constructing writers”
contextual criteria category, such as “imagined details” or “the fictional portrayals of student authors’ lives,” (p. 89) in making placement decisions?

7. What rhetorical values will placement evaluators use to place (or not place) essays that appear to fall outside of the placement category range and curriculum, such as essays written in non-persuasive genres, essays written by nonnative and nonstandard speakers of English, or essays written off-prompt or off-topic?

8. To what extent will placement evaluators use their knowledge of curricular exemplars or model essays (as demonstrated in GSW’s 110/111 Sample Evaluated Essays Manual and 112 Sample Evaluated Essays Manual) and/or match students’ perceived abilities to write persuasive pieces to one of the argumentative essay assignments taught in the course sequence (proposing a solution, speculating about causes, arguing a position, justifying an evaluation, etc.) in making placement decisions?

The principal and supporting research questions positioned the study’s main inquiry and claim: to determine to what extent evaluators’ rhetorical values and placement decisions exhibited constructivist content validity. The principal research question, therefore, pursued and collected valuable information—the extent to which placement evaluators’ decisions exhibited constructivist content validity—used to make the focused validation argument at the conclusion of “Chapter Four: Study Findings and Analysis.” (Refer to the Chapter Four’s “Discussion,” pp. 134-149, for the focused validation argument.) The supporting research questions coalesced around the central premise of this principal research question—to what extent were placement evaluators’ rhetorical values aligned with the curriculum? In order to address this question, the supporting research questions sought to reveal both the rhetorical values that guided the placement evaluators and what factors influenced these values. Supporting Research Question 1
sought to uncover evaluators’ implicit, unarticulated rhetorical values and to ascertain how their rhetorical values defined the wide range of students’ writing skill levels within and between the writing courses in the program. Supporting Research Question 2 examined how the passage of time influenced rhetorical values with respect to normed and idiosyncratic evaluative criteria. Supporting Research Question 3 studied how evaluators employed a hierarchy of high-order and low-order curricular concerns in individual and collaborative placement decisions. Supporting Research Question 4 observed how the Placement Coordinator, placement training and norming sessions, and placement materials influenced evaluators’ rhetorical values employed in placement decisions.

Supporting Research Question 5 investigated the degree to which placement evaluators relied upon their experiences as teachers and upon their memories of students’ writing skills to make placement decisions. Supporting Research Question 6 appraised to what extent placement evaluators speculated about students’ writing abilities beyond actual placement essays, and more generally, how they envisioned students’ writing skills, both real and imagined, within each placement category. Supporting Research Question 7 examined the rhetorical values evaluators used to place essays written in genres not aligned with the program’s curriculum. Supporting Research Question 8 studied to what extent evaluators relied upon their knowledge of model, exemplar essays to judge students’ writing abilities against the curriculum. All of the supporting research questions attempted to identify placement evaluators’ primary rhetorical values, how they employed these rhetorical values in their placement decisions, and what factors influenced both their rhetorical values and decision-making processes.

The methodology for the study was designed to address these principal and supporting research questions. The following section (“Methodology,” pp. 71-82) presents the study’s
research participants and research methods used to triangulate data from the four groups of research participants—the 2006 GSW Placement Program participants, the 2006 GSW Instructor participants, the 2006 BGSU Student participants, and the Former and Current GSW Instructor participants—in order to address the principal research question and particular supporting research questions.

**Methodology**

With regard to specific methods and instruments, Johanek (2000) advised researchers to inquire, “What instruments will I need to borrow/construct” (p. 112)? The study adapted Broad’s (2003) research model by triangulating data from four groups of participants: the 2006 GSW Placement Program Participants, the 2006 GSW Instructor Participants, the 2006 BGSU Student Participants, and Former and Current GSW Instructors. Beach (1992) explained that “data” is any “raw material” gathered for a research project; “data” may include written or oral scripts involving “readers or writers creating meaning with texts” collaboratively (p. 271). Lauer and Asher (1988) pointed out that ethnographers use “triangulation” to combine “multiple sources of data” and the “multiplicity of observations” in fieldwork. Such data may include “multiple observers,” “writing samples,” “interviews,” and “copious notes” (p. 42). Broad (2003) triangulated copious amounts of data. In his study, Broad analyzed and triangulated hundreds of pages of notes based upon observations, transcriptions of group discussions and individual interviews, and program documents to produce the Dynamic Criteria Map of instructors’ rhetorical values at City University (pp. 24-26).

Regarding the 2006 GSW Placement Program Participants, several instruments were employed to triangulate the data: audio taped pair evaluation sessions; videotaped placement training sessions and audio taped norming sessions; first and second individual interviews; first
and second interviews with paired evaluators; first and second group interviews; and program
documents (see “2006 Placement Program Participants,” pp. 674-691, in “Appendix H: Consent
Forms and Scripts for the Study”). In addition, one focus group interview was conducted with
the 2006 GSW Instructor Participants (see “2006 GSW Instructor Participants,” pp. 695-698, in
“Appendix H: Consent Forms and Scripts for the Study”); fifty sample essays were collected
from 2006 BGSU Student Participants (see “2006 BGSU Student Participants,” pp. 699-700, in
“Appendix H: Consent Forms and Scripts for the Study”); and email questionnaires were
collected from former and current GSW instructors (see “Former and Current GSW Instructors,”
pp. 701-703, in “Appendix H: Consent Forms and Scripts for the Study”). These documents in
the appendix are the final approved scripts for the study; scripts were modified and approved
several times.

After the data was collected and/or transcribed from all four groups of research
participants, an initial analysis of the data led to a further narrowing of the data set and research
questions. Chapter Four’s “Focused Data Sets and Research Questions,” pp. 87-94, discusses
how the final, focused data sets included the 2006 GSW Placement Program Participants’ audio
taped pair evaluation sessions, videotaped placement training sessions, and audio taped norming
sessions in addition to writing program documents. (Refer to Chapter Four’s sections “Data
Collection Procedures,” pp. 86-87, and the “Focused Data Sets and Research Questions,” pp. 87-
94, for a complete discussion of the rationale for the final research methodology, focused data
sets, and principal and supporting research questions.)

Even though the research questions and data sets were later refocused in Chapter Four,
the methodology and corresponding appendices (designed to collect data from the 2006 GSW
Placement Program Participants, the 2006 GSW Instructor Participants, the 2006 BGSU Student
Participants, and Former and Current GSW Instructor Participants) are described below for five principal reasons: to demonstrate how the study evolved, albeit untidily, and became more focused and refined because of the pilot study; to present the methods that were designed and used before the research questions were refocused and data sets were later finalized for analysis; to offer writing program administrators sample methods and interview scripts; to provide background information—a description of each method used in the study—for Chapter Four’s justification for focusing the data sets and principal and supporting research questions; and most importantly, to provide information regarding the excluded data sets, which could be studied in future adaptations of this study. (Refer to Chapter Five’s “Implications for Further Research,” pp. 191-197, for the revision and possible continuation of this DCM study with regard to these excluded data sets as well as DCM research opportunities beyond the scope of this study.)

2006 GSW Placement Program Participants

Audio taped pair evaluation sessions.

The conversations between paired evaluators debating and discussing their placement decisions were audio taped over the course of the 2006 Placement Program. More specifically, conversations were transcribed, coded, and analyzed. Many of the interview questions were based upon rhetorical and evaluative issues that emerged from these evaluative sessions. These taped conversations were central to the study; the evaluators’ deliberations represented the live, dynamic evaluation process captured in the Dynamic Criteria Maps of the 2006 GSW Placement Evaluators’ rhetorical values. (Refer to Chapter Four’s “Figure 1: English 110 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 105; “Figure 2: English 111 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 106; and “Figure 3: English 112 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 107.) As a result, the data from these taped evaluation sessions addressed the principal research question and all of the supporting research questions. Broad
(2003) recorded mid-term, portfolio evaluation sessions, which he transcribed word-for-word from audio and video tapes (pp. 26-27).

Videotaped and audio taped placement training and norming sessions.

The Placement Coordinator was video taped conducting the training of the placement evaluators on June 8, 2006, and June 9, 2006, and she was audio taped conducting the norming and recalibration sessions on June 19, 2006, and June 28, 2006. This instrument helped address Supporting Research Question 4, which examined the influence of the Placement Coordinator, training and norming sessions, and training materials on evaluators’ placement decisions.

Questionnaires.

Placement evaluators handwrote responses to questionnaires at the beginning, middle, and end of the Placement Program to informally assess the evolution of their general evaluative tendencies. Bishop (1999) explained that questionnaires can be used to chart themes or informally code immediate responses (p. 111). The purpose of the questionnaire was to provide a quick impression—not an exhaustive explanation—of readers’ individual and collaborative tendencies at a given moment in the program. Bishop suggested that researchers use questionnaires or survey to “set a scene” and assess “general tendencies,” (p. 90) which, in this case, involved evaluators’ placement setting and assessment tendencies.

Because a questionnaire was given at the beginning, middle, and end of the placement program, the principal goal was to evaluate how time affected readers’ evaluative decisions with regard to the curriculum to answer Supporting Research Question 2, which sought to determine how temporal effects influenced rhetorical values with respect to normed and idiosyncratic evaluative criteria. This method measured evaluators’ changing and unchanging systems of evaluative priorities regarding what they perceived as easy or difficult placement decisions, and
more generally, how they approached various placement decisions and prioritized their evaluative concerns. Bishop pointed out that researchers use questionnaires to define and improve research questions (p. 81). The questionnaire was also designed to address Supporting Research Questions 1, 3, 6, and 7; these research questions examined evaluators’ implicit rhetorical values, their hierarchy of evaluative concerns, their perceptions of students’ writing abilities, and their reactions to essays written in non-persuasive genres respectively (see “Questionnaires,” pp. 676-678, in “Appendix H: Consent Forms and Scripts for the Study”).

First and second individual interviews.

Two 30-minute, audio taped, structured individual interviews with the placement evaluators were conducted. Fontana and Frey (2000) explained that in the “structured interview,” researchers ask participants predetermined questions and anticipate a narrow array of responses (p. 650). The goal of the first interview was to elicit general background information from the participants and focus on placement essay features that evaluators had been noting on their Placement Note Sheets. In the first interview, structured questions elicited what Bishop (1999) called “open-ended” or “grand-tour questions,” which encouraged the participants to provide “overview” information (p. 96). During some of his interviews, Broad (2003) asked “open-ended” or “grand tour” questions to conduct interviews based on issues important to the participants (p. 27). More specifically, this study’s first individual interview focused on initial placements—placement decisions made before final, collaborative decisions—both generally and with respect to specific placement decisions. The goal of the second interview was to focus on the evaluators’ placement decisions in their collaborative placement discussions. In particular, this interview focused on collaborative placements—placement decisions made by partners—both generally and with respect to specific placement decisions.
Because the study employed constructivist grounded theory, the interviews followed up on features that emerged from the data. Consequently, in interview scripts, brackets were included to denote information coded from the data. For the first interview, data from the Placement Note Sheets were included in brackets; data from the audio taped pair evaluation sessions were included in brackets for the second interview. In his study, Broad (2003) asked participants about specific moments involving evaluative conflict in norming or trio sessions. He showed participants transcribed excerpts from these sessions, and he asked them specific questions based upon what they had previously said; he recommended that researchers script questions to ask participants to clarify their understanding of the criteria they invoked in evaluation sessions (p. 27). In other words, he employed Strauss and Corbin’s (1998) “theoretical sampling” (pp. 73-85), in which he followed up on topics and themes that emerged from his data findings in subsequent interviews. Furthermore, Broad used brackets in his interview scripts to denote information regarding criteria he inserted later.

Bishop (1999) asserted that structured interviews help the researcher focus and refine data collection methods because researchers formulate questions based on previous data collection in the field. She explained that ethnographers interview participants to confirm and explicate what they observe in the field; she argued that structured interviews allow researchers to ask questions that build upon responses to earlier questions (pp. 96-99). In the first individual interview, Strauss and Corbin’s (1998) “theoretical sampling” was employed, for interviewees were provided with transcripts of audio taped pair evaluation sessions and transcribed Placement Note Sheets; in the second interview, interviewees were provided with copies of placement essays they had evaluated and transcripts of audio taped pair evaluation sessions pertaining to those essays.
For both interview scripts, there were two sets of questions—the Research Question-Specific Questions and General Questions. Questions were chosen from one or both lists depending upon the evaluative issues that emerged from the data. For both interviews, the research question-specific questions addressed the Principal Research Question and all of Supporting Research Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8. However, other evaluative issues emerged unrelated to these research questions, so while research question-specific questions were used to address the research questions directly, other unexpected issues were addressed with the general questions (see “First Individual Interview Questions” and “Second Individual Interview Questions, pp. 679-682, in “Appendix H: Consent Forms and Scripts for the Study”).

First and second interviews with paired evaluators.

Two 30-minute, audio taped, structured individual interviews were conducted with each pair of placement evaluators. There were two activities in this interview. The goal of the first activity was to address Supporting Research Question 3 with respect to how placement evaluators collaboratively prioritized rhetorical values and high- and low-order criteria regarding collaborative agreement, disagreement, and/or indecision.

Interviewees were asked to discuss specific, placement decisions; they were provided with copies of placement essays and relevant transcribed passages from their discussions concerning the essays to provide context. Again, brackets were included in the interview scripts to denote information from the transcripts. In the second activity, a brief mapping session was conducted; participants visually depicted features they had been using in placing essays into each placement category, English 110, English 111, and English 112, in a map and then discussed these features. The goal of this activity was not to organize, synthesize, or conceptualize the relationships among perceived students’ skills, but to graphically depict as many features as
possible within each placement category. To use Broad’s (2003) terminology, the goal was to be “descriptive” rather than “normative” during this stage (p. 133).

The goal of the second interview with paired evaluators was to explore the dynamics of collaborative decision-making in placement decisions. At this point in the placement program, paired evaluators were able to reflect on their individual and collaborative decision-making processes. In order to explore this dynamic, evaluators were asked to complete various placement tasks and to explain their collaborative, decision-making processes regarding these tasks, invoking the think-aloud protocols of cognitive composition research. Evaluators were provided with essays, which “feature as many kinds of rhetorical successes and failures as possible” (Broad, 2003, p. 128), and that had already been placed. Participants were provided with both provocative, challenging sample essays—samples that exhibited a wide range of features—as well as samples that were clearly weak or strong. More specifically, evaluators were provided with an essay that appeared to be borderline, an essay that resembled a GSW exemplar, and an essay that appeared to fall outside of the placement categories and curriculum.

In addition to investigating the wide range of students’ skill levels within and between the writing courses in the program with respect to Supporting Research Questions 2, 7, and 8, the interviews explored how evaluators’ collaborative decisions changed over the course of time, how evaluators placed essays written in non-argumentative genres, and how evaluators drew upon curricular models to assess students’ writing regarding these placement tasks. As in the first interview with the paired evaluators, the purpose of this method was to ascertain the full range of evaluative values at work in their decisions as discussed in Supporting Research Question 1. Overall, this method focused on final collaborative placements—placement decisions made by partners (see “First Interview with Paired Evaluators Questions” and “Second
Interview with Paired Evaluators Questions, pp. 683-687, in “Appendix H: Consent Forms and Scripts for the Study”).

First and second group interviews.

Two 45-minute group interviews were conducted with the participants. As stated in the pilot study section, in a focus group interview, researchers ask multiple participants specific questions at the same time (Fontana & Frey, 2000, p. 651). The purpose of the first and second group interviews was to have participants discuss central, recurring evaluative issues or themes that seemed integral to their placement decisions and to participate in brainstorming activities concerning rhetorical criteria. Since Broad (2003) presented a series of questions to City University for discussion and debate (p. 133), a list of guiding questions and activities were provided to this study’s participants during the first two group interviews. In particular, guiding questions and activities focused on central evaluative issues that emerged from the individual interviews, paired interviews, transcribed discussions, and/or the maps they created in these interviews (see “First Group Interview Questions” and “Second Group Interview Questions, pp. 688-694, in “Appendix H: Consent Forms and Scripts for the Study””).

Program documents.

The 2006 Online Writing Placement Test, the 2006-07 Placement Evaluators’ Handbook, training materials, 2006 Placement Statistics, and handwritten Placement Note Sheets (which placement evaluators used to record their impressions of the textual features of the essays) were studied. Broad (2003) found that his participants at times specifically referred to program documents in promoting rhetorical judgments during portfolio assessment; he explained that he studied program documents to obtain essential data because instructors discussed these documents in assessing students’ essays (p. 28). The study sought to determine to what degree
placement evaluators referred to or relied upon published or written materials in making assessment decisions in order to address Supporting Research Question 4.

**2006 GSW Instructor Participants**

Group interview.

A group of GSW instructors was assembled for one interview to articulate the wide range of students’ skills within each principal placement category range, English 110, English 111, and English 112. Full-time instructors and administrators discussed and articulated their perceptions of real and ideal writing skills of students in each GSW class. The goal of this interview was not to organize, synthesize, or conceptualize the relationships among students’ writing skills but to graphically depict as many writing skills as possible within each writing course. Using Broad’s (2003) terminology, the goal of the methods was to be “descriptive” rather than “normative”--the latter involves data analysis (p. 133).

This interview addressed Supporting Research Question 6, which appraised to what extent placement evaluators envisioned students’ writing skills, real or imagined, within each placement category. These participants were included in the study to examine how a group of experienced instructors and administrators viewed students’ writing skills in each class: English 110, English 111, and English 112. The data collected was compared with the data concerning how 2006 placement evaluators actually viewed students’ skills when placing them into the individual placement categories: English 110, English 111, and English 112. More specifically, Strauss and Corbin’s (1998) “theoretical comparisons” (pp. 78-85) were utilized to compare students’ perceived writing skills in each class to perceived students’ writing skills within each placement category (see “Questions for Group Interview with GSW Instructors,” pp. 697-698, in “Appendix H: Consent Forms and Scripts for the Study”).
2006 BGSU Student Participants

Sample placement essays.

Because DCM studies include sample essays to accompany transcribed evaluation sessions, fifty samples of placement essays were collected with the permission of students. Broad (2003) explained that the Dynamic Criteria Map should be published with the “sample texts that informed it” from assessment sessions (p. 134). Three essays have been reprinted in the appendices to serve as sample essays. In selecting writing samples, Broad (2003) explained that for the purposes of DCM, sample texts should “feature as many kinds of rhetorical successes and failures as possible” and generate discussion (p. 128). As a result, samples of essays that elicited debate and/or discussion between placement evaluators were collected (see “Placement Essay Consent Email,” pp. 699-700, in “Appendix H: Consent Forms and Scripts for the Study” and “Appendix I: Sample Essays,” pp. 704-705, for sample placement essays).

Former and Current GSW Instructors

Email questionnaire.

In order to address Supporting Research Question 6, which examined the extent to which placement evaluators speculated about students’ writing abilities, an email questionnaire was sent to former and current GSW instructors to obtain their opinions on students’ writing skills upon entering their English 110, English 111, and English 112 classes. The data gathered from these participants was compared to the data concerning how placement evaluators viewed students’ skills while placing them into individual placement categories—English 110, English 111, and English 112. In addition, this data complemented data collected from the 2006 GSW Instructor Participants group interview. This group included full-time instructors, part-time instructors, teaching assistants, administrators, and/or staff who had taught in the program (see
CHAPTER THREE

“Participant Consent Email and Questionnaire,” pp. 701-703, in “Appendix H: Consent Forms and Scripts for the Study”).

Dynamic Criteria Mapping as Data Analysis

Chapter Three provided a broad overview of the study’s setting, research questions, and methodology, all of which evolved during the pilot study. The Dynamic Criteria Mapping process is not covered at length in this chapter because DCM is predominantly a data analysis process and is a major factor in the study’s data analysis discussed in Chapter Four. Briefly, though, the DCM research model identifies, defines, analyzes, and maps the rhetorical values that educators articulate and employ in writing assessments. (Refer to “Chapter One: Overview of the Dissertation,” pp. 1-8, for a description of the DCM research model, and for the theoretical underpinning and recent applications of the DCM research model, refer to Chapter Two’s sections “Theory of Complementarity and Communal Writing Assessment Pedagogy,” pp. 18-22, and “The First Three Generations of DCM Applications,” pp. 41-50.)

Broad’s (2003) DCM model provides a data analysis procedure in which educators’ live evaluative criteria, or rhetorical values used to assess writing in real time, are conceptually grouped and linked together into a Dynamic Criteria Map. In “Chapter Four: Study Findings and Analysis,” the audio taped pair evaluation sessions became the core, final data set of the study, so the evaluators’ live, dynamic evaluation processes are captured in the study’s Dynamic Criteria Maps of the 2006 Placement Program Participants placement decisions. (Refer to Chapter Four’s section “Data Analysis Procedures,” pp. 94-114, for a discussion of the grounded theory methodology and Dynamic Criteria Mapping procedures used to analyze the study’s data, and refer to Appendix A: Pilot Study’s section “Data Analysis,” pp. 220-225, for a description of the Dynamic Criteria Mapping data analysis process used to create “Figure 4: Dynamic Criteria
Map for Finding Articles and Writing Prompts,” p. 245, for the pilot study). Ultimately, educators study these maps to determine “how they do value students’ writing” in order to “undertake high professional discussions regarding how they should value that writing,” which facilitate program design and/or improvement (Broad, 2003, pp. 133-135).

Although Chapter Three presented an overview of the research site and initial methodology of this dissertation study, “Chapter Four: Study Findings and Analysis” provides the final details concerning the study’s research participants, data collection procedures, data analysis protocols, results, and discussion of these results. Accordingly, Chapter Four describes the research participants (see the section “Research Participants,” p. 85); summarizes the final research methods (see the section “Data Collection Procedures,” pp. 86-87); provides the finalized, focused data sets and research questions (see the section “Focused Data Sets and Research Questions,” pp. 87-94); reviews the final data analysis procedures, including Dynamic Criteria Mapping procedures, grounded theory methodology, and specialized software used to create this study’s Dynamic Criteria Maps and quantitative codebooks (see the section “Data Analysis Procedures,” pp. 94-114; “Figure 1: English 110 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 105; “Figure 2: English 111 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 106; “Figure 3: English 112 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 107; and “Table 1: Quantitative Codebooks of Frequently Used Criteria,” p. 108); defines the relationship between placement readers’ evaluative criteria and the writing program’s curricular criteria with regard to the criteria maps and codebooks (see the section “Findings,” pp. 114-134 and “Appendix B: Study’s Data and Results,” pp. 268-654); and presents the focused constructivist content validation argument: four validation-argument questions for the Placement Program to consider to strengthen the correlation between the Placement Program’s CWA practices and the program’s curriculum (see the section “Discussion,” pp. 134-149).
CHAPTER FOUR: STUDY FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

The purpose of “Chapter Four: Study Findings and Analysis” is to execute the dissertation’s central claim in the study: Broad’s (2003) DCM research model can be adapted to provide a focused validation argument to strengthen the 2006 GSW Placement Program’s constructivist content validity, the relationship between the placement program’s communal writing assessment (CWA) practices and the writing program’s curriculum. Most significantly, Chapter Four presents a focused constructivist content validity argument to improve the placement program’s evaluative procedures based upon Broad’s (2003) Dynamic Criteria Mapping data analysis procedures.

This chapter provides six major sections and is supported by a corresponding appendix. The first section (“Research Participants,” p. 85) describes the participants in the study. The second section (“Data Collection Procedures,” pp. 86-87) provides a summary of the research methodology. The third section (“Focused Data Sets and Research Questions,” pp. 87-94) discusses the final focusing of the data selection and principal and supporting research questions. The fourth section (“Data Analysis Procedures,” pp. 94-114) discusses a number of items used to create the study’s Dynamic Criteria Maps and quantitative codebooks: grounded theory methodology, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, QSR International NVivo 7 qualitative coding software, quantitative analyses, and most importantly, Broad’s Dynamic Criteria Mapping procedures. (For this study’s criteria maps and codebooks, refer to “Figure 1: English 110 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 105; “Figure 2: English 111 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 106; “Figure 3: English 112 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 107; and “Table 1: Quantitative Codebooks of Frequently Used Criteria,” p. 108.) With respect to the Dynamic Criteria Maps of the 2006
placement evaluators’ rhetorical values or criteria, the fifth section (“Findings,” pp. 114-134) summarizes the study results, addresses the principal and supporting research questions, and defines the correlation between placement readers’ evaluative criteria and the writing program’s principal and secondary curricular criteria. This section is based upon “Appendix B: Study’s Data and Results,” pp. 268-654, which provides criteria glossaries, examples from the transcripts, and comprehensive quantitative codebooks. Supported by the data analysis and findings, the sixth section (“Discussion,” pp. 134-149) presents a focused constructivist content validation argument--four validation-argument questions for the Placement Program to consider--to strengthen the relationship between the GSW Placement Program’s CWA practices and program curriculum.

Research Participants

The study centered on nine participants: Placement Coordinator Gina and four pairs of placement evaluators. Gina was the Placement Coordinator for the 2005 and 2006 Placement Programs, and the placement evaluators were Teaching Assistants who had taught English 111 and English 112 in the program. Two placement evaluators participated in both the pilot and principal studies. To protect the confidentiality of the participants in accordance with the university’s Human Subjects Review Board (HSRB) policies, “Gina” is a pseudonym for the Placement Coordinator, and each pair of evaluators is identified by number: Pair 1, Pair 2, Pair 3, and Pair 4. Chapter Three (“Settings of the Study,” pp. 52-64) explains the historical and contemporary context of the research participants’ setting, including a thorough discussion of my role as a participant-observer ethnographer, a historical overview of GSW’s exit and placement assessment practices, the 2006 online placement model, and the program’s placement procedures.
Data Collection Procedures

Initially, the study collected data from four groups of research participants: the 2006 GSW Placement Program Participants, the 2006 GSW Instructor Participants, the 2006 BGSU Student Participants, and Former and Current GSW Instructors. (Refer to Chapter Three, “Methodology,” pp. 71-82, for a detailed summary and theoretical rationale of the research instruments created to triangulate data from these participants.) In synopsis, various instruments and procedures were utilized to collect data from the Placement Program Participants: audio taped pair evaluation sessions; videotaped placement training sessions and audio taped norming sessions; first and second individual interviews; first and second interviews with paired evaluators; first and second group interviews; and program documents. Moreover, one focus group interview was conducted with 2006 GSW Instructor participants; fifty sample essays were collected from 2006 BGSU student participants; and email questionnaires were collected from former and current GSW instructors. (Refer to “Appendix H: Consent Forms and Scripts for the Study,” pp. 671-703, for the final HSRB approved script for each instrument.)

The study focused on the analysis of three sets of data, however, so only these three sources of data sets are described in this chapter: the audio taped pair evaluation sessions, videotaped placement training sessions and audio taped norming sessions, and program documents. In “Appendix I: Sample Essays,” pp. 704-705, three sample placement essays, one for each placement category, have been provided from the 2006 BGSU Student Participants; however, these documents are only provided as sample placement essays, for they are neither analyzed nor discussed in this study. Students provided written permission to republish their essays in their entirety in accordance with HSRB guidelines, and the students’ names have not been identified.
Over the course of six weeks, June 7 through July 20, 2006, conversations between paired evaluators debating and discussing their placement decisions were audio taped, transcribed, coded, and analyzed. For three days, June 7, 8, and 9, 2006, the Placement Coordinator was videotaped conducting the training of the placement evaluators, and she was audio taped conducting the norming and recalibration sessions on June 19, 2006, and June 28, 2006. Concerning this focused data set, evaluation discussions and training sessions were recorded and transcribed using a Sanyo cassette transcriber trc9010. From June 12 through July 19, 2006, four placement evaluator pairs’ discussions were simultaneously recorded daily, Monday through Thursday, with four portable cassette recorders. Evaluators scored approximately 2600 essays; all individual and final placement scores were transcribed into an Excel spreadsheet. Finally, the 2006 Placement Evaluators’ Handbook 2006-07, which describes the program’s writing courses and criteria for placement, was studied.

Focused Data Sets and Research Questions

Before providing a detailed description of the data analysis procedures, this section discusses why and how the principal and supporting research questions and the data sets were refocused for data analysis. As discussed in Chapter Three, a pilot study resulted in research questions and instruments for implementing the dissertation’s central claim and led to a revision of the original research questions. (Refer to “Appendix E: Original Study Methodology,” pp. 658-660, for the HSRB approved instruments that corresponded to the original principal and supporting research questions.) The pilot study findings led to one principal research question and eight supporting research questions. (Refer to Chapter Three’s “Pilot Study and Research Questions,” pp. 65-71 and “Appendix A: Pilot Study,” pp. 213-267, for an overview of the principal and supporting research questions; the pilot study informed the study’s research
After the data was collected and/or transcribed from all four groups of the research participants (the 2006 GSW Placement Program Participants, 2006 GSW Instructor Participants, 2006 BGSU Student Participants, and Former and Current GSW Instructors) an initial analysis of the data led to a further narrowing of the data set and research questions.

This initial analysis made apparent that the data separated into two types--placement evaluators’ actual, live rhetorical values or criteria used in assessing placement essays and placement evaluators’ recollections of these same values or criteria used in evaluating these essays. As a result, two different data sets emerged--the audio taped pair evaluation sessions that recorded the evaluators’ live rhetorical placement decisions and the individual, pair, and group interviews that recorded evaluators’ recollections of transcribed discussions and decisions. The rhetorical criteria articulated in these two data sets--evaluators’ use of criteria and evaluators’ recollections of these same criteria--were often contradictory.

Rather than trying to reconcile or to treat separately these two data sets, the study was further focused to examine in-depth the evaluators’ real-time discussions. This strategy was appropriate because it follows the same application as Broad’s (2003) DCM study, which prioritized the rhetorical values educators actually used in portfolio assessment over recollections of these values, and the audio taped conversations were central to identifying and studying the live, dynamic evaluation process between placement evaluators. For consistency, all other data sets that focused on recollections or memories, such as the interview with the 2006 GSW instructor participants and email questionnaires collected from former and current GSW instructors, were excluded from the formal analysis reported in this chapter. However,
videotaped placement training sessions, audio taped norming sessions, and program documents were included to describe curricular criteria.

After an initial analysis of the evaluators’ discussions, the research questions were refocused and streamlined. Some research questions simply could not be addressed and/or answered by this study. In addition, some supporting research questions proved to be redundant, and some supporting research questions were eliminated. While the principal research question positioned the study to collect data relevant to study the program’s constructivist content validity and provide a focused validation argument, the supporting research questions united to uncover the rhetorical values that guided the placement evaluators.

Here are the revised research questions, summaries, and rationales. (Refer to Chapter Three’s “Pilot Study and Research Questions,” pp. 65-71, for an overview of the principal and supporting research questions based upon the pilot study findings.)

**Principal Research Question**

What rhetorical values will guide BGSU’s GSW Program placement evaluators in placing students into one of the first-year writing courses, English 110 (Developmental Writing), English 111 (Introductory Writing), or English 112 (Varieties of English), and to what extent will evaluators’ rhetorical values and placement decisions exhibit constructivist content validity as articulated in the placement documents and training sessions?

**Supporting Research Questions**

1. How will identifying evaluators’ rhetorical values more clearly define the curricular boundaries between courses within the sequence?

2. How will the passage of time in the Placement Program affect readers’ rhetorical values and evaluative decisions with regard to the curriculum?
3. To what extent will placement evaluators rely upon their teaching experiences to employ contextual criteria that invoke Broad’s (2003) “constructing writers” contextual criteria category, such as “imagined details” or “the fictional portrayals of student authors’ lives,” (p. 89) in making placement decisions?

4. What rhetorical values will placement evaluators use to place essays that appear to fall outside of the placement category range and curriculum, such as essays written in non-persuasive genres, essays written by nonnative and nonstandard speakers of English, or essays written off-prompt or off-topic? To what extent will placement evaluators use their knowledge of curricular exemplars or model essays (as demonstrated in GSW’s 110/111 Sample Evaluated Essays Manual and 112 Sample Evaluated Essays Manual) and/or match students’ perceived abilities to write persuasive pieces to one of the argumentative essay assignments taught in the course sequence (proposing a solution, speculating about causes, arguing a position, justifying an evaluation, etc.) in making placement decisions?

The principal research question, which seeks to determine the extent to which placement evaluators’ decisions exhibited constructivist content validity, has been revised to define constructivist content validity as those criteria and values articulated in the placement training documents and training. Placement training, as thoroughly detailed in the Placement Evaluators’ Handbook 2006-07, clearly articulated the entrance-level, exit-level, and course requirements for the program. After teaching in the writing program, serving as a 2006 Placement Prompt Committee member, the 2006 Assistant Placement Coordinator, and an Assistant to the GSW Director, and after researching the online writing placement test design and past assessment practices of placement evaluators, I can attest that the Placement Program’s training and Placement Evaluators’ Handbook 2006-07 provides the most accurate representation of the
writing curriculum. The *Handbook*’s depiction of the curriculum is grounded in the online writing placement test design, entrance-level criteria, and the specific skills taught in each course; in this study, the evaluators’ rhetorical values are measured against the *Handbook* and the placement training sessions. Initially, the group interview with the 2006 GSW Instructor participants and the email questionnaires from former and current GSW instructors were conducted to describe the curriculum along with the training materials. However, since the interview and questionnaires focused primarily on recollections and assertions, they were excluded from the study along with the other interviews. In addition, Supporting Research Question 4, which focused on how placement materials influenced evaluators’ rhetorical values employed in placement decisions, was eliminated because of the Principal Research Question’s revised focus.

Supporting Research Question 1 was devised originally to uncover evaluators’ implicit, unarticulated rhetorical values and to ascertain how their rhetorical values defined the wide range of students’ writing skill levels within and between the writing courses in the program. However, an initial analysis of the evaluators’ discussions revealed that no distinction could be made between implicit and explicit rhetorical values. Because the discussions brought rhetorical values to light, all values studied were explicit values or criteria. Furthermore, the revised Supporting Research Question 1 has been refocused to study only the curricular boundaries between courses as demonstrated in borderline placement decisions.

Supporting Research Question 2 was intended to examine how the passage of time influenced rhetorical values with respect to normed and idiosyncratic evaluative criteria. Because pairs made placement decisions collaboratively, idiosyncratic evaluative criteria could not be reliably or accurately studied. As a result, the revised Supporting Research Question 2
studied the temporal effects of the Placement Program on placement evaluators’ collaborative
decisions. More specifically, the rhetorical criteria used by evaluators during the first half of the
Placement Program were compared to the rhetorical criteria used during the second half of the
program.

Supporting Research Question 3 was designed to study how evaluators employed a
hierarchy of high-order and low-order curricular concerns in individual and collaborative
placement decisions. This research question was eliminated (with consequent renumbering)
because all placement decisions are made collaboratively; the distinction between individual and
 collaborative placement decision-making could not be discerned. Even though evaluators made
notes about each placement decision on their “Placement Note Sheets,” which included
individual placement criteria and placement scores, this study could not determine how each
individual evaluator prioritized or weighted the criteria they noted. Also, a system of priorities
for collaborative decision-making could not be identified. In other words, which criteria
individuals or pairs valued over others could not be reliably determined. Instead, this study
presents a quantitative analysis of pairs’ frequently used criteria—the preponderance of criteria
most frequently considered—but not hierarchies of evaluative priorities, values, or criteria.

Supporting Research Question 4 was proposed to study how the Placement Coordinator,
placement training and norming sessions, and placement materials influenced evaluators’
rhetorical values employed in placement decisions. As discussed earlier, this supporting research
question was eliminated (with consequent renumbering) due to its inclusion in the Principal
Research Question. Supporting Research Question 5 was created to investigate the degree to
which placement evaluators relied upon their experiences as teachers and upon their memories of
students’ writing skills to make placement decisions, and Supporting Research Question 6 was
designed to appraise to what extent placement evaluators speculated about students’ writing abilities beyond actual placement essays, and more generally, how they envisioned students’ writing skills, both real and imagined, within each placement category. Because both of these questions were nearly identical—how evaluators’ used their experiences as teachers to make placement decisions—both research questions were combined into one question—the revised Supporting Research Question 3. In this revised supporting research question, “contextual” criteria were examined and considered. According to Broad’s (2003) study, “contextual criteria demonstrated how pedagogical, ethical, collegial, and other aspects of the environment surrounding students’ texts guided and shaped evaluators’ decisions” (p. 73).

Supporting Research Question 7 was created to examine the rhetorical values that evaluators used to place essays written in genres not aligned with the program’s curriculum. The Revised Supporting Research Question, now number 4, was modified to eliminate the phrase “or not place.” When placement evaluators could not decide upon a placement, they sent it to a third reader (the Placement Coordinator or Assistant Placement Coordinator) for the final evaluation. However, an initial review of discussions that led to third reads found that there were too few third reads (one pair never sent an essay to a third reader), and the factors leading to the disagreements were unclear. As a result, this factor was eliminated as a factor for analysis.

Finally, Supporting Research Question 8 was proposed to study to what extent evaluators relied upon their knowledge of model, exemplar essays to judge students’ writing abilities against the curriculum. This question was incorporated into the revised Supporting Research Question 4 because it considers another possible evaluative criterion evaluators might invoke. Therefore, this revised supporting research question sought to examine both the rhetorical values, which
evaluators used to place essays written in genres not aligned with the program’s curriculum, and essays that exhibited essays that were aligned with curricular exemplars.

As with the research questions discussed in Chapter Three, all of the revised and final supporting research questions attempted to identify placement evaluators’ primary rhetorical values, how they employed these rhetorical values in their placement decisions, and what factors influenced their rhetorical values and decision-making processes. However, the refocused and revised questions were designed to streamline the process and better reflect the realities of the data analysis process discussed in the next section. The next section, “Data Analysis Procedures,” pp. 94-114, discusses the analysis of the focused data set.

Data Analysis Procedures

In this section, the data analysis procedures with regard to the focused data set are described in clear, step-by-step methods. Carl Auerbach and Louise Silverstein (2003) explained that in order for any data analysis to be justified, the procedures must be “transparent” so that “researchers can know the steps” that lead to a study’s “interpretation” (p. 84). Two principal data sets were analyzed: the transcribed evaluators’ discussions were analyzed to uncover the criteria that the four pairs of evaluators used in placing students into the three writing courses, and the Placement Program’s training and documents were analyzed to reveal the writing program’s curriculum and curricular criteria. Once the evaluators’ rhetorical criteria were represented in codebooks and Dynamic Criteria Maps, these criteria could be judged against the curriculum’s principal and secondary rhetorical values or criteria. The analysis of the evaluators’ discussions is followed by the analysis of the training documents and sessions.

Because the goal of my study was to answer the principal and supporting research questions, the data analysis procedures reflected this overarching goal. To address the Principal
Research Question and Supporting Research Question 1, which seek to identify the wide range of rhetorical values, placement evaluators’ overall use of rhetorical criteria was identified. With respect to another aspect of Supporting Research Question 1, borderline placement decisions were identified to define the curricular boundaries between placement categories. To deal with Supporting Research Question 2, which studies the temporal effects upon readers’ evaluative decisions, the first and second halves of the Placement Program were examined separately. To answer Supporting Research Question 3, which explores to what extent placement evaluators invoked contextual criteria based upon teaching experiences, criteria were categorized as either contextual or textual criteria as defined by Broad’s (2003) study. To attend to Supporting Research Question 4, which studied the rhetorical values evaluators used to place essays that appeared to fall outside of the placement category range and curriculum--essays written by nonnative and nonstandard speakers of English, essays written off-prompt or off-topic, and essays that appeared to match curricular exemplars or model essays taught in the course sequence--criteria were identified and coded that addressed these rhetorical issues.

The data analysis procedures entailed many steps involving Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, and QSR NVivo 7 software; these steps reflected Broad’s (2003) “constructivist grounded theory” methodology. Broad explained that his study expanded the principals of grounded theory articulated by Strauss and Corbin (1994), Charmaz (2000), and Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Strauss (1987) (p. 24). Strauss and Corbin (1998), whom Broad (2000, 2003) cited throughout his study, explained that the researcher using grounded theory “begins with an area of study and allows the theory to emerge from the data” (p. 12).

Using Broad’s (2003) “grounded theory” or “constructivist grounded theory” research approach, this study undertook three primary stages to collect, code, and describe the data
generated from placement evaluators’ discussions: “concurrent analysis,” “comprehensive analysis,” and “close analysis and verification” (pp. 28-31). Broad (2003) employed “concurrent analysis” during his 12-week data collection process (p. 28). During this stage, Broad (1997) developed categories based upon the participants’ experiences in the study (p. 140). Lauer and Asher (1988) pointed out that researchers infer patterns from the data and categorize the data accordingly (p. 43). During this stage, Broad (2003) also conducted interviews to explore issues that emerged from the incoming data (p. 29); this study conducted interviews based upon themes from incoming data but excluded these interviews from the final data analysis. Instead, this study emphasized one particular aspect of Broad’s (2000) “concurrent analysis”; he recorded themes and patterns that served as “guideposts and reference points” in his data analysis process (p. 227). In this study, evaluators’ placement discussions and decisions were categorized prior to analyzing their deliberations.

This study used Broad’s (1997, 2003) “concurrent analysis” procedures to discover and create the initial principal criteria categories. For each placement category—English 110, English 111, and English 112—two types of placement decisions were identified and copied into two separate Word files—borderline and disagreement discussions—for the first and second halves of the Placement Program. Transcribed discussions from June 12 through June 22, 2006, constituted the first half of the Placement Program, and transcribed discussions from June 26 through July 19, 2006, comprised the second half of the Placement Program. Transcribed placement discussions for each pair, which were typed into Microsoft Word documents, were saved by date.

Borderline discussions involved placement decisions in which one or both evaluators in a pair could not individually decide between two adjacent placement categories; he/she initially
could not place an essay that exhibited two placement categories, or he/she said the placement essay was “borderline,” “iffy,” or “split” between placement categories. For instance, an evaluator may have written down the score 110+/111-. To be classified as a “borderline” discussion, at least one person had to indicate that he/she was uncertain with his/her initial placement decision and that the source of that uncertainty was due to the perception that the essay exhibited two of the three placement categories--English 110, English 111, and English 112. However, most borderline discussions eventually resulted in English 110, English 111, or English 112 placement decisions.

Disagreement discussions referred to a placement discussion in which both evaluators were fairly confident or very confident in their placement decisions but initially disagreed with one another’s initial placement decisions. For example, one evaluator may have had an original score of 111, and the second evaluator may have had an initial score of English 110. Neither evaluator indicated serious doubt about their initial placement decisions; however, most of these discussions eventually resulted in English 110, English 111, or English 112 collaborative placement decisions. Finally, 110S placement decisions were identified and copied into a separate file. According to the Placement Evaluators’ Handbook, 110S is a placement category for the weakest writers; students who receive an 110S are placed into English 110, but the instructors are notified that these students need extra assistance (p. 7). Because there were too few 110S placement decisions to separate them into time periods, the 110S data was analyzed but not considered in the “Findings” or “Discussion” sections. (Refer to the document “Number of Discussions,” pp. 653-654, in “Appendix B: Study’s Data and Results” for the number of borderline, disagreement, and 110S discussions separated into the two time periods; the total number of discussions examined for each placement category for each pair is included, also.)
Discussions that did not fall into these categories were excluded from the data set. Individual and final placement scores were verified against an Excel spreadsheet record of every individual and final collaborative placement decision. Individual and final placement scores for the approximate 2,600 essays evaluated were recorded after the 2006 Placement Program.

Consequently, for each pair of evaluators, thirteen Word files were created: one file for borderline discussions resulting in 110 placement decisions during the first half of the Placement Program (June 12-June 22) and one file for borderline discussions resulting in 110 placement decisions during the second half of the Placement Program (June 26-July 19); one file for disagreement decisions resulting in 110 placement decisions during the first half of the Placement Program (June 26-July 19) and one file for disagreement decisions resulting in 110 placement decisions during the second half of the Placement Program (June 26-July 19); one file for borderline discussions resulting in 111 placement decisions during the first half of the Placement Program (June 12-June 22); and one file for borderline discussions resulting in 111 placement decisions during the second half of the Placement Program (June 26-July 19); one file for disagreement decisions resulted in 111 placement decisions during the first half of the Placement Program (June 12-June 22) and one file for disagreement decisions resulted in 111 placement decisions during the second half of the Placement Program (June 26-July 19); one file for borderline discussions resulting in 112 placement decisions during the first half of the Placement Program (June 12-June 22); one file for borderline discussions resulting in 112 placement decisions during the second half of the Placement Program (June 26-July 19); one file for disagreement decisions resulted in 112 placement decisions during the first half of the Placement Program (June 12-June 22), and one file for disagreement decisions resulted in 112
placement decisions during the second half of the Placement Program (June 26-July 19); and one file for placement decisions resulting in 110S placements.

The study’s analysis then moved into Broad’s (2000, 2003) “comprehensive analysis stage” to separate and describe criteria that evaluators used during their placement discussions. Broad (2003) explained that during the “comprehensive analysis” stage, he studied the transcripts to isolate and describe the rhetorical criteria that his participants discussed. Using QSR NVivo software, he coded seven hundred pages of transcripts (or 18,500 lines) to categorize 124 “distinct factors” at work in instructors’ evaluative decisions (p. 29). In addition, Broad (2003, p. 28) pointed out that Strauss and Corbin (1998) called this data analysis stage “open coding,” and Guba called it the “discovery mode.” Strauss and Corbin (1998) defined “open coding” as “the analytic process through which concepts are identified and their properties and dimensions are discovered in data” (p. 101), and Guba (1978) explained that ethnographic researchers discover “phenomenon” and “test their relationships” (p. 13). More specifically, Ryan and H. Russell (2000) explained that grounded theory researchers read through interview transcripts line by line, and they use “open coding” or “in vivo coding” to induce “potential themes” and “concepts” based on “real examples from the text” (p. 783).

In this study, QSR NVivo 7 was used to analyze and code each transcript. Before beginning the analysis, Lyn Richards’ tutorial “Teach-yourself NVivo 7: the introductory tutorial” was consulted at http://www.sagepub.co.uk/richards/. Richards founded the QSR software company. (Refer to the QSR website, http://www.qsrinternational.com/products/productoverview/nvivo%5F7.htm, for tutorials pertaining to QSR NVivo 7). To address the research questions, a tree node for each project containing nodes that corresponding to the original research questions discussed in Chapter Three was created. In NVivo, Richards
(2006) explained that individual “nodes” contain ideas or topics pertaining to particular categories and “tree nodes” allow researchers to “catalog nodes so they are easily found” under main categories or headings. Regarding this study, for each pair of evaluators, a project file containing thirteen separate files was created in QSR NVivo 7 for coding; the thirteen Word file discussed on pages 96-97 were imported into NVivo. Consequently, thirteen tree nodes were created, one tree node for each file, and under each tree node were individual nodes (e.g. RQ 3, RQ 4, RQ 5, RQ 7, RQ 8), which contained information about the principal and supporting research questions. In addition, using NVivo’s “Annotation” function, passages were highlighted and annotated to note textual and contextual criteria and issues related to the research questions. For each pair, thirteen files were coded and annotated.

While each text was coded and annotated line-by-line, individual criterion, comprised of phrases and sentences, were identified and entered into a corresponding Excel spreadsheet. Thirteen Excel spreadsheets were created for each pair; each Excel file corresponded to an NVivo file. The Excel spreadsheets were used in addition to the NVivo analysis because some lines in the text contained more than one evaluative criterion; by compiling a list in Excel while coding, the texts were reviewed again, and multiple criteria were uncovered within single lines. In other words, some lines or words contained evaluative factors that could be classified into more than one criterion category. This study identified in vivo passages--words and phrases taken directly from the transcripts--which defined criteria in the four constellations in each Dynamic Criteria Map; this data analysis strategy answered Broad’s (2003) call for criteria and constellations supported by “lists of synonyms and antonyms” (p. 134). Broad pointed out that each evaluative criterion of his Dynamic Criteria Map was described by educators’ “verbatim excerpts” or actual “comments” (p. 126). Although words and phrases were direct quotes from
placement evaluators in this study, not all of these criteria names are in vivo codes: The criteria names are intended to represent the larger criteria at work in placement evaluators’ decisions.

Within each Excel spreadsheet, the criteria were alphabetized and duplicate criteria were deleted. Then each criterion in the Excel spreadsheet was entered one-by-one into the “Find Content” function in QSR NVivo 7: Every phrase or sentence invoking a criterion was copied and pasted into a new Word file under criteria heading names. As a result, thirteen new Word documents were created for each pair of evaluators. These thirteen Word documents contained individual criterion with corresponding in vivo examples from the transcribed texts for each placement category. While copying and pasting these in vivo examples from the texts, codes and annotations were used to separate textual from contextual criteria and to note issues related to the principal and supporting research questions.

After all of the passages were copied and pasted into the thirteen Word documents, the study employed Broad’s “constant comparative method” to review each file in order to create, organize, and reorganize criteria and corresponding textual and contextual examples into placement categories for each pair. Passages from the transcribed texts were organized under criteria according to Broad’s two principal criteria categories--textual and contextual criteria--which had been previously coded in NVivo. According to Broad (2003), textual criteria involve “qualities or features of the text being judged,” and contextual criteria involve “issues not directly related to the text being judged” (p. 34). During the “comprehensive analysis stage,” Broad used the “constant comparative method” to compare and contrast criteria and categories—a key tenant of grounded theory (p. 30).

Strauss and Corbin (1998) explained that “making comparisons is essential for identifying categories and for their development” (p. 93); furthermore, “comparative analysis”
involves giving data with common characteristics the same code or name (p. 105). Furthermore, this analysis process involves “axial coding” in which “categories are systematically developed and linked with subcategories” (p. 143). Ryan and Bernard (2000) also pointed out that researchers link and contrast thematic categories (p. 783), and Bishop (1999) argued that data coding allows researchers to reduce data by “noting patterns and themes, clustering by conceptual groups, … making contrasts and comparisons, establishing linkages and relationships, shuttling between data and larger categories, [and] noting relationships” (p. 117).

“Appendix B: Study’s Data and Results,” pp. 268-654, resulted from the final phase of Broad’s (2003) “comprehensive analysis stage,” which emphasized Broad’s “constant comparative method” and Strauss and Corbin’s (1998) “comparative analysis” and “axial coding.” For each pair of evaluators, the thirteen files of criteria and supporting in vivo examples were compiled into three Word documents, one for English 110, one for English 111, and one for English 112. As a result, three new Word documents containing placement criteria in vivo examples were created for each pair of evaluators: “110 Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples,” “111 Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples,” and “112 Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples.” Each file contained the criteria with the corresponding categories: “Borderlines First Time Period,” “Disagreements First Time Period,” “Borderlines Second Time Period,” and “Disagreements Second Time Period.” The “110 Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples” files contained the additional category “110S.” The number of instances each criterion was invoked was counted according to these categories and is included in parentheses. Then the in vivo examples for each criterion were studied, criterion-by-criterion, and glossaries containing textual and/or contextual definitions of each individual criterion were written. For each pair of evaluators, three new Word documents containing criteria definitions were created for each pair

Next, three Word documents that contained four codebooks with the approximate frequency of evaluators’ use of each criterion were created for each pair: “110 Frequency Codebooks,” “111 Frequency Codebooks,” and “112 Frequency Codebooks.” Each codebook contained the frequency that each individual criterion was invoked in placement discussions overall, in borderline discussions, and in discussions during the first half (June 12-June 22) and second half (June 26 -July 19) of the Placement Program. Frequencies were meant to be general approximations, and all frequencies were rounded up to the nearest half-point; therefore, the frequencies in any given codebook do not total 100%. The purpose of generating frequencies was to ascertain the approximate weight evaluators gave to evaluative criteria in order to map them for analysis. (Refer to “Table 1: Quantitative Codebooks of Frequently Used Criteria,” p. 108, for three codebooks of each pair’s ten most frequently invoked criteria with respect to the English 110, 111, and 112 placement categories.)

The final process of data analysis implemented Broad’s (1997) “close analysis and verification” stage to cluster and map the rhetorical values or criteria which evaluators used in making placement decisions (pp. 30-31). According to Broad (2003), this stage resembles Strauss and Corbin’s “selective coding” and Guba’s “verification mode” (p. 30). Strauss and Corbin (1998) explained that “selective coding is the process of integrating and refining categories” (p. 143). Guba (1978) pointed out that the researcher’s efforts to “discover” what he/she has examined will cause him/her to “propose certain categories in which to assimilate and account for the noted responses” and lead into a “verification mode” (p. 6); furthermore, Guba
explained that during this mode or phase, the researcher “can test the utility, scope, and inclusiveness” of his/her “category system” (p. 54).

During the “close analysis and verification” stage, Broad (2003) revised and refined categories based on the continual and “close” examination of the data, which were validated and clustered into thematic categories in his Dynamic Criteria Map (pp. 30-31). Broad (2003) focused on the refinement of individual criterion and the relationships among criteria “while attempting to account for all data” (p. 31). According to Ryan and Bernard (2000), as researchers develop thematic categories, investigators connect these categories into “theoretical models” (p. 783). For instance, Broad created “constellations” in which he grouped supporting criteria under major themes. His “Aesthetic Constellation” included the sub criteria “texture,” “humor,” and “creative” (p. 51). Each constellation was part of the larger Dynamic Criteria Map, which demonstrated the interrelationships among constellations. Broad (2003) explained that educators can create their program’s Dynamic Criteria Map by establishing “interrelationships” and various configurations connecting these clusters; for instance, “some criteria might be mapped two- or three-dimensionally” (p. 132).

This study’s “close analysis and verification” data analysis process culminated in the creation of one Dynamic Criteria Map for each placement category, English 110, English 111, and English 112, and corresponding codebooks. (Refer to the Dynamic Criteria Maps and codebooks on the following pages: “Figure 1: English 110 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 105; “Figure 2: English 111 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 106; “Figure 3: English 112 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 107; and “Table 1: Quantitative Codebooks of Frequently Used Criteria,” p. 108.) Each Dynamic Criteria Map represents the preponderance of evaluators’ use of rhetorical criteria. In each criteria map, there are four constellations--one representing each placement evaluator pair--
Figure 1: English 110 Dynamic Criteria Map

**Textual and Contextual Criteria Key**
An asterisk (*) has been placed after each criterion having both textual and contextual definitions. Two asterisks (**) have been placed after each criterion that has a solely contextual meaning.

**Pair 1 (71 Discussions)**
- **[ST] Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions:** 10% * (1st, 2nd)
- **[M] Clarity/Readability:** 8% * (1st, 2nd)
- **[M] Paragraphs:** 8% (1st, 2nd)
- **[ORG] Focus:** 6.5% * (2nd)
- **[EXT] Benefit/Need/Help:** 5.5% ** (1st, 2nd)
- **[ORG] Essay Organization/Structure/Five Paragraph:** 5.5% * (1st, 2nd)
- **[MET] Metadiscourse/Transitions:** 5% * (1st)
- **[AUD] Conversational:** 5% * (1st, 2nd)
- **[AUD] Argument:** 4.5% * (1st, 2nd)
- Narrative/Stories/Personal Stories/Self-Centered: 3.5% * (1st, 2nd)

**Pair 2 (56 Discussions)**
- **[ST] Sentences/Lower-Level Issues/Sentence-Level Issues/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Sentence Clarity/Syntax:** 15% * (1st, 2nd)
- **[ORG] Essay Structure/Essay Organization/Five Paragraph Essay:** 11% * (1st, 2nd)
- **[M] Paragraphs:** 7% * (1st)
- **[DEV] Development/Length:** 8% * (1st, 2nd)
- **[M] Clarity/Readability:** 6% * (1st, 2nd)
- **[M] Introduction/Conclusion:** 4% * (1st, 2nd)
- **[AUD] Argument:** 3% * (1st, 2nd)
- **[EXT] Benefit/Need:** 3% **
- **[SU] Article/Attribution/Quotation/Source Citations:** 3%* (2nd)

**Pair 3 (52 Discussions)**
- **[ST] Sentence/Syntax Issues:** 18% * (1st, 2nd)
- **[ORG] Essay Structure/Organization:** 9% * (1st, 2nd)
- **[DEV] Development/Length:** 8%* (1st, 2nd)
- **[M] Paragraphs:** 6% (1st, 2nd)
- **[M] Clarity/Readability:** 6% * (1st, 2nd)
- **[M] Introduction/Conclusion:** 4% * (1st, 2nd)
- **[AUD] Argument:** 3% * (1st, 2nd)
- **[EXT] Benefit/Need:** 3% **
- **[SU] Article/Attribution/Quotation/Source Citations:** 3%* (2nd)

**Pair 4 (67 Discussions)**
- **[ST] Sentence Constructions/Syntax:** 13% * (1st, 2nd)
- **[DEV] Development/Length:** 9%* (1st, 2nd)
- **[M] Paragraphs:** 7% * (1st, 2nd)
- **[ORG] Focus/Off Track/Jumpy:** 3% (1st)
- **[ORG] Thesis:** 3% (2nd)
- **[M] Clarity/Readability:** 5% * (1st, 2nd)
- **[M] Introduction/Conclusion:** 3% (1st)
- **[ORG] Essay Basics/Essay Structure/Essay Organization:** 6% * (1st, 2nd)

**Dynamic Criteria Map Key**
Similar criteria in two or more constellations are linked through color coding. The color coding scheme is below.
- **Argument:** Violet
- **Benefit/Need:** Teal
- **Clarity/Readability:** Green
- **Development:** Blue
- **Essay Structure:** Orange
- **Focus:** Brown
- **Introduction/Conclusion:** Gray
- **Paragraphs:** Turquoise
- **Sentence-Level Issues:** Red
- **Thesis/Controlling Purpose:** Pink

**Temporal Effect Key**
Following each criterion, a “1st” in parenthesis indicates that the criterion was in the top ten most frequently invoked criteria between June 12 and June 22, 2006; and a “2nd” indicates that the criterion was in the top ten most frequently invoked criteria between June 26 and July 19, 2006.

**Curricular Criteria Key**
Abbreviations placed in brackets before criteria denote links to the writing program’s curriculum as articulated in the placement documents and training.
- **[AUD] Audience**
- **[DEV] Development**
- **[EXT] Extra Attention/Extra Time**
- **[SU] Source Use**
- **[ORG] Organization/Theme/Structure**

**Qualification**
Some criteria that may have comprised the “Grammar-Usage-Mechanics” and “Word Choice” curricular criteria were not combined prior to this analysis.
Figure 2: English 111 Dynamic Criteria Map

**Textual and Contextual Criteria Key**
An asterisk (*) has been placed after each criterion having both textual and contextual definitions. Two asterisks (**) have been placed after each criterion that has a solely contextual meaning.

**Pair 1 (83 Discussions)**
- **[ST]** Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions/Sentence Boundaries: 12% *(1st, 2nd)*
- **[M]** Clarity/Readability: 8% *(1st, 2nd)*
- **[M]** Paragraphs: 8% *(1st, 2nd)*
- **[ORG]** Essay/Essay Organization/Essay Structure/Five Paragraph: 6% *(1st, 2nd)*
- **[ORG]** Main Ideas/Supporting Ideas/ Main Points/Supporting Points: 5% *(1st)*
- **[ORG]** Metadiscourse/Transitions: 5% *(1st, 2nd)*
- **[M]** Repetition: 4% *(1st, 2nd)*
- **[ORG]** Focus: 4% *(1st, 2nd)*
- **[M]** Introduction/Conclusion/ Set Up/End: 4% *(1st, 2nd)*

**Narrative/Personal**: 3% *

**Pair 2 (74 Discussions)**
- **[ST]** Sentence/Syntax Issues: 12% *(1st, 2nd)*
- **[ORG]** Essay Structure/Essay Organization/Basic Essay/Five Paragraph Structure: 9% *(1st, 2nd)*
- **[DEV]** Development/Length: 6% *(1st, 2nd)*
- **[M]** Paragraphs: 6% *(1st, 2nd)*
- **[M]** Clarity/Readability: 4% *(1st)*
- **[ORG]** Points: 3% *(1st)*
- **[AUD]** Argument: 3% *(1st)*
- **[SU]** Article/Author/Readings/Source Citations: 3% *(2nd)*

**Pair 3 (111 Discussions)**
- **[ST]** Sentence/Syntax Issues: 12% *(1st, 2nd)*
- **[ORG]** Essay Structure/Essay Organization/Five Paragraph Structure: 6% *(1st, 2nd)*
- **[DEV]** Development/Length: 6% *(1st, 2nd)*
- **[M]** Paragraphs: 6% *(1st, 2nd)*
- **[M]** Introduction/Conclusion: 4% *(2nd)*
- **[M]** Clarity/Readability: 4% *(1st)*
- **[ORG]** Points: 3% *(1st)*
- **[Aud]** Argument: 3% *(1st)*
- **[SU]** Article/Author/Readings/Source Citations: 3% *(2nd)*

**Pair 4 (94 Discussions)**
- **[ST]** Sentence Constructions/Sentence Variety/Syntax: 11% *(1st, 2nd)*
- **[DEV]** Development/Length: 8% *(1st, 2nd)*
- **[ORG]** Essay/Essay Organization/Five Paragraph: 6% *(1st, 2nd)*
- **[ORG]** Main Ideas/Supporting Ideas/ Main Points/Supporting Points: 5% *(1st)*
- **[ORG]** Metadiscourse/Transitions: 5% *(1st, 2nd)*
- **[M]** Repetition: 4% *(1st, 2nd)*
- **[M]** Focus: 4% *(1st, 2nd)*
- **[M]** Introduction/Conclusion/ Set Up/End: 4% *(1st, 2nd)*
- **Narrative/Personal**: 3% *

**Curricular Criteria Key**
Abbreviations placed in brackets before criteria denote links to the writing program’s curriculum as articulated in the placement documents and training.
- **--Audience**: [AUD]
- **--Early Stages of Sophistication**: [SOP]
- **--Development**: [DEV]
- **--Multiple Curricular References**: [M]
- **--Organization/Theme/Structure**: [ORG]
- **--Sentence Structure**: [ST]
- **--Source Use**: [SU]

**Qualification**: Some criteria that may have comprised the “Grammar-Usage-Mechanics” and “Word Choice” curricular criteria were not combined prior to this analysis.
Figure 3: English 112 Dynamic Criteria Map

Textual and Contextual Criteria Key
An asterisk (*) has been placed after each criterion having both textual and contextual definitions. Two asterisks (**) have been placed after each criterion that has a solely contextual meaning.

Pair 1 (24 Discussions)
[SOP] Good/Strong and Weak/Passive Essay Elements: 15% *
(1st, 2nd)
[ORG] Metadiscourse/Transitions: 9% * (1st, 2nd)
[ORG] Main Ideas/Supporting Ideas/Main Points/Supporting Points: 8% *
(1st, 2nd)
[DEV] Development: 7% * (1st, 2nd)
[M] Paragraphs: 7% * (1st, 2nd)
[ORG] Essay Organization/Structure/Five Paragraph: 5% (2nd)
[M] Introduction/Set Up/Conclusion: 6% * (1st, 2nd)
Benefit/Need/Help/Extra Time: 6% ** (1st, 2nd)
[SU] Article Source/Citations/Quotation Integration: 4% * (1st, 2nd)
Clarity/Readability: 4% (2nd)

Pair 2 (36 Discussions)
[DEV] Development: 7% * (1st, 2nd)
[M] Paragraphs: 7% * (1st, 2nd)
[ORG] Essay Organization/Structure/Five Paragraph: 5% (2nd)
[M] Introduction/Set Up/Conclusion: 6% * (1st, 2nd)
Benefit/Need/Help/Extra Time: 6% ** (1st, 2nd)
[SU] Article Source/Citations/Quotation Integration: 4% * (1st, 2nd)
Clarity/Readability: 4% (2nd)

Pair 3 (34 Discussions)
[ST] Sentence/Syntax Issues: 9% *
(1st, 2nd)
[ORG] Essay Structure/Organization/Five Paragraph Structure: 9% * (1st, 2nd)
[DEV] Development/Length: 9% *
(1st, 2nd)
Can Go/Could Go/Talked Up/Talked Down/Bump It Up: 6% ** (1st, 2nd)
[ORG] Points/Options: 5% (1st, 2nd)
[WC] Vocabulary: 4.5% * (1st, 2nd)
[SU] Article/Author/Readings/Source Citations: 4% * (1st, 2nd)
[M] Clarity/Readability: 4% * (1st)
[M] Paragraphs: 4% * (2nd)
Weird/Strange/Odd: 3.5% (1st)

Pair 4 (44 Discussions)
[DEV] Development/Length: 11% *
(1st, 2nd)
[SOP] Sophistication: 8% * (1st, 2nd)
[SU] Article/Author/Source/Quotations/References: 7% * (1st, 2nd)
Writing Ability of Student: 6% ** (1st, 2nd)
Entertaining/Fun/Interesting/Liked: 5% ** (1st, 2nd)
[ORG] Metadiscourse/Transitions: 5% * (1st)
[SU] Article/Source: 5% * (2nd)
[ST] Sentence Constructions/Sentence Variety/Syntax: 5% * (1st, 2nd)
Can/Could Do/Go: 4% ** (1st)
[SOP] Strong/Solid: 4% (1st)

Dynamic Criteria Map Key
Similar criteria in two or more constellations are linked through color coding. The color coding scheme is below.

Article/Source: Dark Yellow
Can Go: Indigo
Clarity/Readability: Green
Development: Blue
Essay Structure: Orange
Metadiscourse/Transitions: Plum
Paragraphs: Turquoise
Points: Teal
Sentence-Level Issues: Red
Sophistication: Pink
Strong/Solid: Dark Blue
Writing Ability of Students: Brown

Temporal Effect Key
Following each criterion, a “1st” in parenthesis indicates that the criterion was in the top ten most frequently invoked criteria between June 12 and June 22, 2006; and a “2nd” indicates that the criterion was in the top ten most frequently invoked criteria between June 26 and July 19, 2006.

Curricular Criteria Key
Abbreviations placed in brackets before criteria denote links to the writing program’s curriculum as articulated in the placement documents and training.
--Audience: [AUD]
--Critical Thinking: [CT]
--Development: [DEV]
--Multiple Curricular References: [M]
--Organization/Theme/Structure: [ORG]
--Sentence Structure: [ST]
--Sophistication in One or More Areas: [SOP]
--Source Use/Synthesis of Sources: [SU]
--Word Choice: [WC]

Qualification: Some criteria that may have comprised the “Grammar-Usage-Mechanics” and “Word Choice” curricular criteria were not combined prior to this analysis.
Table 1: Quantitative Codebooks of Frequently Used Criteria

**English 110**: Ten most frequently invoked criteria with respect to English 110 placement decisions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair 1 (71 Discussions)</th>
<th>Pair 2 (56 Discussions)</th>
<th>Pair 3 (52 Discussions)</th>
<th>Pair 4 (67 Discussions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions: 10%</td>
<td>Sentences/Lower-Level Issues/ Sentence-Level Issues/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Sentence Clarity/Syntax: 15%</td>
<td>Sentence/Syntax Issues: 18%</td>
<td>Sentence Constructions/Syntax: 13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraphs: 8%</td>
<td>Argument: 8%</td>
<td>Talked Up/Talked Into/Can Go/Could Go/Can Live With: 9%</td>
<td>Weird/Odd/Strange: 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus: 6.5%</td>
<td>Paragraphs: 7%</td>
<td>Development/Length: 8%</td>
<td>Paragraphs: 7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay Organization/Structure/Five Paragraph: 5.5%</td>
<td>Thesis/Controlling Purpose: 5%</td>
<td>Clarity/Readability: 6%</td>
<td>Clarity/Readability: 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metadiscourse/Transitions: 5%</td>
<td>Development/Support: 4.5%</td>
<td>Introduction/Conclusion: 4%</td>
<td>Focus/Off Track/Jumpy: 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversational: 5%</td>
<td>Audience/Reader Awareness: 4%</td>
<td>Argument: 3%</td>
<td>Introduction/Conclusion: 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Argument: 4.5%</td>
<td>Benefit/Need/Ready For/Gain: 4%</td>
<td>Benefit/Need: 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Narrative/Personal: 3%</td>
<td>Clarity/Readability: 4%</td>
<td>Article/Attribution/Quotation/Source Citations: 3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**English 111**: Ten most frequently invoked criteria with respect to English 111 placement decisions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair 1 (83 Discussions)</th>
<th>Pair 2 (74 Discussions)</th>
<th>Pair 3 (111 Discussions)</th>
<th>Pair 4 (94 Discussions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity/Readability: 8%</td>
<td>Sentences/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Syntax: 10%</td>
<td>Essay Structure/Organization/Basic Essay/Five Paragraph Structure: 9%</td>
<td>Development/Length: 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraphs: 8%</td>
<td>Development/Support: 8%</td>
<td>Development/Length: 6%</td>
<td>Essay/Essay Structure/Essay Organization/Five Point: 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay/Essay Organization/Essay Structure/Five Paragraph: 6%</td>
<td>Argument: 7%</td>
<td>Paragraphs: 6%</td>
<td>Paragraph/Paragraph Breaks: 5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Ideas/Supporting Ideas/Main Points/Supporting Points: 5%</td>
<td>Paragraphs: 5%</td>
<td>Can Live With/Could Live With/Can Go/Could Go/Talked Down/Talked Into/Talked Up: 5%</td>
<td>Introduction/Conclusion: 4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metadiscourse/Transitions: 5%</td>
<td>Introduction/Conclusion: 4%</td>
<td>Introduction/Conclusion: 4%</td>
<td>Metadiscourse/Transitions: 4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetition: 4%</td>
<td>Thesis/Controlling Purpose: 4%</td>
<td>Clarity/Readability: 4%</td>
<td>Focus/Jumps Around/Shifts: 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Focus: 4%</td>
<td>Points: 3%</td>
<td>Article/Authors/Readings/References: 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Introduction/Conclusion/Set Up/End: 4%</td>
<td>Writing Ability/Knowledge/Attitude of Students: 3%</td>
<td>Argument: 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Narrative/Personal: 3%</td>
<td>Audience/Reader Awareness: 3%</td>
<td>Article/Author/Readings/Source Citations: 3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**English 112**: Ten most frequently invoked criteria with respect to English 112 placement decisions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair 1 (24 Discussions)</th>
<th>Pair 2 (36 Discussions)</th>
<th>Pair 3 (34 Discussions)</th>
<th>Pair 4 (44 Discussions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metadiscourse/Transitions: 9%</td>
<td>Metadiscourse/Transitions: 11%</td>
<td>Essay Structure/Organization/Five Paragraph Structure: 9%</td>
<td>Sophistication: 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Ideas/Supporting Ideas/Main Points/Supporting Points: 8%</td>
<td>Writing Ability/Skill Level/Attitude/Potential of Students: 8%</td>
<td>Development/Length: 9%</td>
<td>Article/Author/Source/Quotations/References: 7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development: 7%</td>
<td>Development: 7%</td>
<td>Can Go/Could Go/Talked Down/Talked Down/Bump It Up: 6%</td>
<td>Writing Ability of Student: 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraphs: 7%</td>
<td>Article/Source: 5%</td>
<td>Points/Options: 5%</td>
<td>Metadiscourse/Transitions: 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay Organization/Structure/Five Paragraph: 5%</td>
<td>Critical Thinking: 4.5%</td>
<td>Vocabulary: 4.5%</td>
<td>Entertaining/Fun/Interesting/Liked: 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction/Set Up/Conclusion: 6%</td>
<td>Sentences/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Syntax: 4%</td>
<td>Article/Author/Readings/Source Citations: 4%</td>
<td>Essay/Essay Structure/Essay Organization/Five Point: 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefit/Need/Help/Extra Time: 6%</td>
<td>Examples/Support/Use of Sources for Support: 4%</td>
<td>Clarity/Readability: 4%</td>
<td>Sentence Constructions/Sentence Variety: 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article Source/Citations/Quotation Integration: 4%</td>
<td>Sophistication: 4%</td>
<td>Paragraphs: 4%</td>
<td>Can/Could Do/Go: 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Clarity/Readability: 4%</td>
<td>Argument: 3%</td>
<td>Weird/Strange/Odd: 3.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strong/10**: 4%
and each constellation contains each pair’s ten most frequently invoked criteria in making English 110, English 111, and English 112 placement decisions. The ten criteria which comprise each constellation were based upon approximations or rough estimates of evaluators’ use of criteria: “Table 1: Quantitative Codebooks of Frequently Used Criteria,” p. 108, presents each pair’s ten most frequently invoked criteria in three codebooks—one for each placement category, English 110, English 111, and English 112. The ten most frequently invoked criteria were selected for each pair because these criteria taken together were employed by evaluation pairs between an estimated 50 to 60 percent of the time, and consequently, generally represent the most frequently invoked rhetorical criteria.

In his “Dynamic Criteria Map of City University’s Textual Qualities,” Broad (2003) depicted the overall dynamic of portfolio evaluators’ rhetorical values or criteria, and he used a variety of visual elements, including arrows, lines, circles, and boxes to illustrate links among constellations and evaluative criteria. As discussed in Chapter Three, Broad (2003) created the “Dynamic Criteria Map of City University’s Textual Qualities” (p. 39) based upon the live, communal deliberations of instructors making pass or fail portfolio decisions. Broad (2003) explained that the DCM process produces a “conceptual map” (p. 24) that provides a “detailed, complex and useful portrait of any writing program’s dynamics” (p. 13) and brings to light rhetorical values instructors use “in the very act of teaching and assessment writing together” (p. 120).

This study’s Dynamic Criteria Maps were designed to address the Principal Research Question and Supporting Research Questions in order to ascertain the constructivist content validity of the placement evaluators’ use of evaluative criteria. Regarding the Dynamic Criteria Maps, criteria are listed in order of frequency within each pair’s constellation. Each map
contains four keys, which provide explanations for the colors, abbreviations, and symbols used in the maps. To address the Principal Research Question, the “Curricular Criteria Key” illustrates connections between and among the writing program’s curricular criteria and the pairs’ evaluative criteria: Abbreviations placed in brackets before criteria denote links to the writing program’s curriculum as articulated in the placement documents and training. In addition, the “Dynamic Criteria Map Key” identifies evaluative criteria connections between and among pairs’ constellations: To identify similar criteria for analysis, related criteria are color coded; in other words, related criteria in two or more constellations are identified with the same color. Through color coding, the maps link similar criteria between and among the pairs’ constellations.

To address Supporting Research Question 2, the “Temporal Effect Key” identifies whether each criterion remained in the ten most frequently cited criteria list during the first and second halves of the Placement Program. Following each criterion, a “1st” in parenthesis indicates that the criterion was in the top ten most frequently invoked criteria between June 12 and June 22, 2006; and a “2nd” indicates that the criterion was in the top ten most frequently invoked criteria between June 26 and July 19, 2006. To address Supporting Research Question 3, the “Textual and Contextual Criteria Key” identifies whether each evaluative criterion had textual and/or contextual meanings. An asterisk (*) has been placed after each criterion having both textual and contextual definitions. Two asterisks (**) have been placed after each criterion that have a solely contextual meaning. In addition, the number of discussions analyzed for each pair with respect to placement category is included after the pair number. These numbers reflect the number of placement discussions that resulted in final, collaborative English 110, English 111, and English 112 placement decisions.
In order to compare the evaluators’ rhetorical criteria with the GSW curriculum, the curriculum was defined using the placement training documents and sessions. As discussed in the “Focused Data Sets and Research Questions” section, pp. 87-94, the Placement Program’s training sessions, which Gina conducted on June 7, 8, and 9, 2006, and the Placement Evaluators’ Handbook 2006-07 most effectively articulated the entrance-level, exit-level, and course requirements for the program’s writing courses English 110, English 111, and English 112. Likewise, both the training sessions and the Handbook clearly articulated the entrance-level criteria evaluators use to place students into courses that match their writing abilities.

The criteria used in placement and exit assessment, and used to teach writing skills in the courses are aligned, and therefore, represent the program’s principal evaluative curricular criteria. According to the Placement Evaluators’ Handbook 2006-07, which Gina reviewed thoroughly during the training sessions, placement features fall into six major categories: “Audience,” “Organization/Theme/Structure,” “Development,” “Sentence Structure,” “Word Choice,” and “Grammar-Usage-Mechanics.” (Refer to “Appendix J: Criteria for Placement,” pp. 706-708, for the criteria used to place essays into the four placement categories: 110S, 110, 111, and 112.) These criteria correspond with the six principal rubric categories--“Audience,” “Organization/Theme/Structure,” “Development,” “Syntax,” “Word Choice,” and “Usage/Mechanics” (pp. 7-12). (Refer to “Appendix K: General Studies Writing Program Rubric,” p. 709, for the exit criteria used to analytically grade essays in English 110, 111, and 112.) Likewise, according to the Handbook, five skills are taught in each course: “Audience,” “Organization/Theme/Structure,” “Development,” “Sentence Structure,” “Word Choice,” and “Grammar-Usage-Mechanics” (pp. 2-6). (Refer to “Appendix L: General Studies Writing..."
Although the criteria are aligned, criteria used for placement assessment, exit assessment, and in teaching writing skills differ in both emphasis and method. For instance, placement features represent entrance-level criteria, criteria used to ascertain writing skills at the beginning of a writing course; rubric criteria represent exit-level criteria, criteria used to judge writing at the end of a writing course; and skill-oriented criteria represent what is being taught between the placement and exit assessments, criteria used to bridge the gap between the placement and exit assessments. However, these six criteria establish the core evaluative, curricular criteria for the writing program.

In addition to these six criteria, Gina emphasized additional secondary criteria or placement indicators during the training sessions; in other words, these criteria did not necessarily determine placements but were probable indicators of placement categories. The following criteria names were created for the study and not coined by Gina during training sessions. For English 110 placements, Gina emphasized the criteria “Serious Writing Problems/Weaknesses Overall,” “Extra Attention/Extra Time,” and “Source Use.” Gina explained that English 110 provides two extra hours for instructors to help students as a class or one-on-one with writing weaknesses, such as grammar, usage, and mechanics errors, and English 110 placement essays may also demonstrate severe or pervasive writing weaknesses or the beginning of source usage. Gina pointed out that evaluators must consider the extent of writing weaknesses and 110 placements if weaknesses are pervasive.

With regard to English 111 placements, Gina emphasized the criteria “Early Stages of Sophistication,” “Source Use,” and “Critical Thinking.” (“Source Use” was also included as a
secondary criterion for English 110 because evaluators invoked this criterion in making English 110 placements.) Gina pointed out that English 111 essays may begin to demonstrate sophistication, introduce sources, or reveal critical thinking or depth of analysis. Concerning 112 placements, Gina emphasized the criteria “Counterargument,” “Sophistication in One or More Areas,” “Source Use/Synthesis of Sources,” and “Critical Thinking.” English 112 placement essays may demonstrate counterarguments, sophistication in one or more criteria areas, use or synthesis of source material, and/or critical thinking to some degree if at all.

As a result of the study of these curricular documents, the Handbook’s “Criteria for Placement” were revised to account for the principal placement criteria and secondary placement criteria. In “Appendix M: Curricular Criteria,” pp. 714-715, elements from “Appendix J: Criteria for Placement” (pp. 706-708), “Appendix K: General Studies Writing Program Rubric” (p. 709), and “Appendix L: General Studies Writing Courses” (pp. 710-713) have been integrated to define curricular criteria (with respect to the six principal curricular criteria and secondary criteria) for the purpose of comparison with placement readers’ evaluative criteria. These “Curricular Criteria,” which describe GSW’s principal and secondary curricular values, were judged against placement readers’ criteria to determine the constructivist content validity of their evaluative practices. More specifically, with the exception of the 110S placement category, the original “Criteria for Placement” for each placement category have been reorganized according to the six principal criteria: “Audience,” “Organization/Theme/Structure,” “Development,” “Sentence Structure,” “Word Choice,” and “Grammar-Usage-Mechanics.” No placement indicators have been altered or deleted. The secondary criteria discussed in placement training sessions have been added under the heading “Secondary Criteria” since these criteria were not primary placement indicators.
Finally, in order to address Supporting Research Question 2, with regard to examining the curricular boundaries between placement categories, placement training and norming sessions were studied with regard to placements resulting from essays that exhibit borderline characteristics. During the placement training session on June 8, 2006, and norming sessions on June 19 and June 28, 2006, Gina explained that the severity of errors or writing weaknesses, such as serious weaknesses in grammar, usage, mechanics, essay structure, syntax, and audience awareness, may indicate a 110 placement. On the other hand, she explained that the sophistication of writing, such as strong or solid essay structure, word choice, argument, metadiscourse, sentence structure, and development, may indicate a 112 placement. In the “Findings” (pp. 113-132) section, the results are organized according to the revised principal and supporting research questions.

Findings

This section presents the study findings with respect to the principal and supporting research questions. Even though a broad description of the overall data analysis is presented, the principal purpose of this section is singularly focused: to define the correlation between the placement readers’ evaluative practices and the writing program’s curricular values. As a result, the findings will be presented with respect to the final, revised Principal Research Question and four supporting research questions.

In this section, each research question is addressed individually and organized hierarchically in the following order: Principal Research Question, Supporting Research Question 1, Supporting Research Question 2, Supporting Research Question 3, and Supporting Research Question 4. Each research question is identified along with a brief summary of that research question for orientation to the particular issue(s) being addressed. The Principal
Research Question examines the constructivist content validity of the evaluators’ rhetorical values overall, and the supporting research questions provide more nuance to this overarching principal research question.

**Principal Research Question:** To what extent will evaluators’ rhetorical values and placement decisions exhibit constructivist content validity?

To focus the study, only the most significant criteria are discussed with respect to two factors. First, only the ten most frequently invoked criteria of each evaluator pair were judged against the curricular criteria. As discussed in the previous section, these ten criteria for each pair constituted approximately 50 to 60 percent of the criteria evaluators used to place essays into English 110, English 111, and English 112. Second, only evaluators’ criteria, which matched up to the curriculum or are invoked by two or more evaluator pairs, are discussed in this section. The Dynamic Criteria Maps coded the connections among evaluators’ live placement criteria and coded the connections among evaluators’ criteria and the curricular criteria valued by the writing program. (Refer to the “Data Analysis Procedures” section, pp. 94-114, of this chapter for details on the map’s organization and components.) In his study, Broad (2003) recommended that “readers lay out the large format Dynamic Criteria Map and follow along during the ensuing discussion” (p. 38). Likewise, it is recommended that readers refer to the Dynamic Criteria Maps and the codebooks as this discussion progresses. (Refer to the Dynamic Criteria Maps and codebooks on the following pages: “Figure 1: English 110 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 105; “Figure 2: English 111 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 106; “Figure 3: English 112 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 107, and “Table 1: Quantitative Codebooks of Frequently Used Criteria,” p. 108.)
Using the Dynamic Criteria Maps, evaluators’ criteria are discussed with respect to the curricular criteria; as a result, criteria are organized according to these principal curricular criteria. With regard to the general classification of evaluators’ criteria according to the six principal curricular criteria--“Audience,” “Organization/Theme/Structure,” “Development,” “Sentence Structure,” “Word Choice,” and “Grammar-Usage-Mechanics”--general definitions of each category are provided to clarify the subsequent classifications of evaluators’ criteria with respect to English 110, English 111, and English 112 placement decisions. “Audience” refers to reader awareness, critical thinking, argument and credibility, tone, and point of view.

“Organization/Theme/Structure” refers to essay and paragraph structure and coherence; thesis, introduction, body, and conclusion organization; and transitions and metadiscourse. “Development” refers to the development of introductions, conclusions, paragraphs, and main ideas with reasons and/or examples. “Sentence Structure” refers to sentence structure, variety, syntax, boundaries, and a variety of syntactical issues. “Word Choice” refers to the use of content and function words, idiomatic expressions, referents, and vocabulary. Finally, “Grammar-Usage-Mechanics” refers to strengths or weaknesses in grammar, usage, and mechanics. (Refer to “Appendix M: Curricular Criteria,” pp. 714-715, to examine how these criteria differ according to placement category.)

The data analysis isolated and defined criteria from each pair’s discussions that resulted in English 110 placements. Seventy-one discussions were analyzed for Pair 1; fifty-six discussions were analyzed for Pair 2; fifty-two discussions were analyzed for Pair 3; sixty-seven discussions were analyzed for Pair 4. Thirty-eight distinct rhetorical values or criteria were isolated for Pair 1; fifty-two distinct rhetorical values or criteria were isolated for Pair 2; forty-four distinct rhetorical values or criteria were isolated for Pair 3; forty-eight distinct rhetorical
values or criteria were isolated for Pair 4. Each criterion exhibited textual and/or contextual meanings; the contextual meanings of criteria are discussed under Supporting Research Question 3.

The following principal curricular criteria were invoked by one or more evaluator pairs in making English 110 placement decisions: “Audience,” “Organization/Theme/Structure,” “Development,” and “Sentence Structure.” The following secondary curricular criteria were invoked by one or more evaluator pairs: “Serious Writing Problems/Weaknesses Overall,” “Extra Attention/Extra Time,” and “Source Use.” (For definitions of the textual and contextual meanings of the criteria evaluators invoked, refer to “Appendix B: Study’s Data and Results,” pp. 268-654, for English 110 Criteria Glossaries for Pair 1, Pair 2, Pair 3, and Pair 4.) With respect to the following discussion, in order for a pair’s evaluative criterion to invoke a curricular criterion, the pair’s criterion had to be comparable, similar, and/or approximate a curricular criterion’s definition.

Invoking the principal curricular criterion “Audience,” Pair 1 used the criteria “Argument (4.5%)” and “Conversational (4.5%)”; Pair 2 used the criteria “Argument (8%)” and “Audience/Reader Awareness (4%)”; and Pair 3 used the criterion “Argument (3%).” Within “Figure 1: English 110 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 105, these curricular references are coded [AUD]. Invoking the principal curricular criterion “Organization/Theme/Structure,” Pair 1 used the criteria “Focus (6.5%),” “Essay Organization/Structure/Five Paragraph (5.5%),” and “Metadiscourse/Transitions (5%)”; Pair 2 used the criteria “Essay Basics/Essay Structure/Essay Organization/Five Paragraph Essay (11%)” and “Thesis/Controlling Purpose (5%)”; Pair 3 used the criterion “Essay Structure/Organization: (9%); and Pair 4 used the criteria “Essay/Essay Basics/Essay Structure/Essay Organization (6%),” “Focus/Off Track/Jumpy (3%),” and “Thesis”
(3%). Within the Dynamic Criteria Map, these curricular references are coded [ORG]. Invoking the principal curricular criterion “Development,” Pair 2 used the criterion “Development/Support (4.5%)”; Pair 3 used the criterion “Development/Length (8%)”; Pair 4 used the criterion “Development/Length (9%).” Within the Dynamic Criteria Map, these curricular references are coded [DEV]. Invoking the principal curricular criterion “Sentence Structure,” Pair 1 used the criterion “Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions (10%)”; Pair 2 used the criterion “Sentences/Lower-Level Issues/Sentence-Level Issues/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Sentence Clarity/Syntax” (15%); Pair 3 used the criterion “Sentence/Syntax Issues” (18%); and Pair 4 used the criterion “Sentence Constructions/Syntax (13%).” Within the Dynamic Criteria Map, these curricular references are coded [ST].

Invoking the secondary curricular criterion “Extra Attention/Extra Time,” Pair 1 used the criterion “Benefit/Need/Help (5.5%)”; Pair 2 used the criterion “Benefit/Need/Ready For/Gain (4%)”; and Pair 3 used the criterion “Benefit/Need (3%).” Within the Dynamic Criteria Map, these curricular references are coded [EXT]. Invoking the secondary curricular criterion “Serious Writing Problems/Weaknesses Overall,” Pair 1 used the criterion “Severity/Amount of Stuff/Enough Things (6%).” Within the Dynamic Criteria Map, this curricular reference is coded [SER]. Invoking the secondary curricular criterion “Source Use,” Pair 3 used the criterion “Article/Attribution/Quotation/Source Citations (3%).” Within the Dynamic Criteria Map, this curricular reference is coded [SU].

Other criteria were invoked by two or more pairs that referenced more than one curricular definition. The criterion “Paragraphs” was utilized by all four evaluator pairs: Pair 1 used the criterion “Paragraphs (8%)”; Pair 2 used the criterion “Paragraphs (7%)”; Pair 3 used the criterion “Paragraphs (6%)”; and Pair 4 used the criterion “Paragraphs (7%).” The criterion
“Clarity/Readability” was utilized by all four evaluator pairs: Pair 1 used the criterion “Clarity/Readability (8%)”; Pair 2 used the criterion “Clarity/Readability (4%)”; Pair 3 used the criterion “Clarity/Readability (6%)”; and Pair 4 used the criterion “Clarity/Readability (5%).” Evaluators used the criteria “Paragraphs” and “Clarity/Readability” to refer to numerous evaluative factors, such as development, organization, argument, and syntax, which related to specific paragraphs or to clarity and readability issues in English 110 essays. Finally, the criterion “Introduction/Conclusion” was utilized by two evaluator pairs: Pair 3 used the criterion “Introduction/Conclusion (4%),” and Pair 4 used the criterion “Introduction/Conclusion (3%).” For both pairs, when using this criterion, evaluators primarily referred to structural and development issues related to introductions and/or conclusions. Because these criteria cannot be easily linked to any one particular principal curricular criterion, they are coded [M] for multiple references to principal curricular criteria as well as additional evaluative factors.

In English 111 placement decisions, eighty-three discussions were analyzed for Pair 1; seventy-four discussions were analyzed for Pair 2; one hundred and eleven discussions were analyzed for Pair 3; and ninety-four discussions were analyzed for Pair 4. Fifty-eight distinct rhetorical values or criteria were isolated for Pair 1; forty-six distinct rhetorical values or criteria were isolated for Pair 2; sixty-six distinct rhetorical values or criteria were isolated for Pair 3; fifty-two distinct rhetorical values or criteria were isolated for Pair 4. As mentioned previously, each criterion exhibited textual and/or contextual meaning or both; contextual meanings of criteria are discussed under Supporting Research Question 3.

The following principal curricular criteria were invoked by one or more evaluator pairs in making English 111 placement decisions: “Audience,” “Organization/Theme/Structure,” “Development,” and “Sentence Structure.” The secondary curricular criteria “Source Use” and
“Early Stages of Sophistication” were invoked. (For definitions of the textual and contextual meanings of the criteria evaluators invoked, refer to “Appendix B: Study’s Data and Results,” pp. 268-654, for English 111 Criteria Glossaries for Pair 1, Pair 2, Pair 3, and Pair 4.) Again, regarding the following discussion, in order for a pair’s evaluative criterion to invoke a curricular criterion, the pair’s criteria had to be comparable, similar, and/or approximate the curricular criteria definitions.


Invoking the principal curricular criterion “Development,” Pair 2 used the criterion “Development/Support (8%),” Pair 3 used the criterion “Development/Length (6%),” and Pair 4 used the criterion “Development/Length (8%).” Within the Dynamic Criteria Map, these curricular references are coded [DEV]. Invoking the principal curricular criterion “Sentence
Structure,” Pair 1 used the criterion “Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions/Sentence Boundaries (12%),” Pair 2 used the criterion “Sentences/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Syntax (10%)”; Pair 3 used the criterion “Sentence/Syntax Issues (12%)”; and Pair 4 used the criterion “Sentence Constructions/Sentence Variety/Syntax (11%).” Within the Dynamic Criteria Map, these curricular references are coded [ST].

Invoking the secondary curricular criterion “Source Use,” Pair 3 used the criterion “Article/Author/Readings/Source Citations (3%),” and Pair 4 used the criterion “Article/Author/Sources/Reading/Citations” (3%). Within the Dynamic Criteria Map, these curricular references are coded [SU]. Invoking the secondary curricular criterion “Early Stages of Sophistication,” Pair 4 used the criterion “Sophistication (3%).” Within the Dynamic Criteria Map, this curricular reference is coded [SOP].

Other criteria were invoked by two or more pairs that referenced more than one curricular definition. The criterion “Paragraphs” was utilized by all four evaluator pairs: Pair 1 used the criterion “Paragraphs (8%)”; Pair 2 used the criterion “Paragraphs (5%)”; Pair 3 used the criterion “Paragraphs (6%)”; and Pair 4 used the criterion “Paragraph/Paragraph Breaks (5.5%).” The criterion “Clarity/Readability” was utilized by two evaluator pairs: Pair 1 used the criterion “Clarity/Readability (8%),” and Pair 3 used the criterion “Clarity/Readability (4%).” As in English 110 placement decisions, evaluators used the criteria “Paragraphs” and “Clarity/Readability” to refer to numerous curricular evaluative criteria, such as development, organization, breaks, argument, and syntax, which related to specific paragraphs or to clarity and readability issues in English 111 essays. Therefore, these criteria cannot be directly linked to any one particular curricular criterion.
The criterion “Introduction/Conclusion” was utilized by four evaluator pairs: Pair 1 used the criterion “Introduction/Conclusion/Set Up/End (4%)”; Pair 2 used the criterion “Introduction/Conclusion (4%)”; Pair 3 used the criterion “Introduction/Conclusion (4%)”; and Pair 4 used the criterion “Introduction/Conclusion (4.5%).” When using this criterion, evaluators primarily referred to structural and development issues related to introductions and/or conclusions. Finally, Pair 1 used the criterion “Repetition,” which referred to various essay components, such as clauses and phrases, which inhibited clarity. Because these criteria cannot be easily linked to any one particular principal curricular criterion, they are coded [M] for multiple references to principal curricular criteria as well as additional evaluative factors.

With respect to English 112 placement decisions, twenty-four discussions were analyzed for Pair 1; thirty-six discussions were analyzed for Pair 2; thirty-four discussions were analyzed for Pair 3; and forty-four discussions were analyzed for Pair 4. Twenty-nine distinct rhetorical values or criteria were isolated for Pair 1; thirty-six distinct rhetorical values or criteria were isolated for Pair 2; forty-one distinct rhetorical values or criteria were isolated for Pair 3; and thirty-three distinct rhetorical values or criteria were isolated for Pair 4. Each criterion exhibited textual and/or contextual meanings; contextual meanings of criteria are discussed under Supporting Research Question 3.

The following principal curricular criteria were invoked by one or more evaluator pairs in making English 112 placement decisions: “Audience,” “Organization/Theme/Structure,” “Development,” “Sentence Structure,” and “Word Choice.” The secondary curricular criteria “Source Use/Synthesis of Sources,” “Counterargument,” “Critical Thinking,” and “Sophistication in One or More Areas” were invoked. (For definitions of the textual and contextual meanings of the criteria evaluators invoked, refer to “Appendix B: Study’s Data and
Results,” pp. 268-654, for English 112 Criteria Glossaries for Pair 1, Pair 2, Pair 3, and Pair 4.)

Regarding the following discussion, in order for a pair’s evaluative criterion to invoke a
curricular criterion, the pair’s criteria had to be comparable, similar, and/or approximate the
curricular criteria’s definitions.

Invoking the principal curricular criterion “Audience,” Pair 2 used the criterion
“Argument (3%).” Within the “Figure 3: English 112 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 107, this
curricular reference is coded [AUD]. Invoking the principal curricular criterion
“Organization/Theme/Structure,” Pair 1 used the criteria “Metadiscourse/Transitions (9%)”,
“Main Ideas/Supporting Ideas/Main Points/Supporting Points (8%)”, and “Essay Organization/
Structure/Five Paragraph (5%)”; Pair 2 used the criteria “Essay Basics/Essay Structure/Essay
Organization/Five Paragraph Essay (11%)” and “Metadiscourse/Transitions (11%)”; Pair 3 used
the criteria “Essay Structure/Organization/Five Paragraph Structure (9%)” and “Points/Options
(5%)”; and Pair 4 used the criteria “Metadiscourse/Transitions (5%)” and “Essay/Essay
Structure/Essay Organization/Five Point (5%).” Within the Dynamic Criteria Map, these
curricular references are coded [ORG]. Invoking the principal curricular criterion
“Development,” Pair 1 used the criterion “Development (7%)”; Pair 2 used the criteria
“Development (7%) and “Examples/Support/Use of Sources for Support (4%)”; Pair 3 used the
criterion “Development/Length (9%)”; and Pair 4 used the criterion “Development/Length
(11%).” Within the Dynamic Criteria Map, these curricular references are coded [DEV].

Invoking the principal curricular criterion “Sentence Structure,” Pair 2 used the criterion
“Sentences/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Syntax (4%)”; Pair 3 used the criterion
“Sentence/Syntax Issues (9%)”; and Pair 4 used the criterion “Sentence Constructions/Sentence
Variety (5%).” Within the Dynamic Criteria Map, these curricular references are coded [ST]. Invoking the principal criterion “Word Choice,” Pair 3 used the criterion “Vocabulary (4.5%).”

Invoking the secondary curricular criterion “Critical Thinking,” Pair 2 used the criterion “Critical Thinking (4.5%).” Within the Dynamic Criteria Map, these curricular references are coded [CT]. Invoking the secondary curricular criterion “Sophistication in One or More Areas,” Pair 1 used the criterion “Good/Strong and Weak/Passive Essay Elements (15%),” Pair 2 used the criterion “Sophistication (4%),” and Pair 4 used the criterion “Sophistication (8%)” and “Strong/Solid (4%).” Within the Dynamic Criteria Map, these curricular references are coded [SOP]. Invoking the secondary curricular criterion “Source Use/Synthesis of Sources,” Pair 1 used the criterion “Article Source/Citations/Quotation Integration (4%)”; Pair 2 used the criterion “Article/Author/Readings/Source Citations (4%)”; Pair 3 used the criterion “Article/Source (5%)”; and Pair 4 used the criterion “Article/Author/Source/Quotations/References (7%).” Within the Dynamic Criteria Map, this curricular reference is coded [SU].

Other criteria were invoked by two or more pairs that referenced more than one curricular definition. The criterion “Paragraphs” was utilized by two evaluator pairs: Pair 1 used the criterion “Paragraphs (7%),” and Pair 3 used the criterion “Paragraphs (4%).” The criterion “Clarity/Readability” was utilized by two evaluator pairs: Pair 1 used the criterion “Clarity/Readability (4%),” and Pair 3 used the criterion “Clarity/Readability (4%).” As in English 110 and English 111 placement decisions, evaluators used the criteria “Paragraphs” and “Clarity/Readability” to refer to numerous evaluative factors, such as development, organization, breaks, argument, and syntax, which related to specific paragraphs or to clarity and readability issues in English 112 essays. Therefore, these criteria cannot be directly linked to any one particular curricular criterion. Because these criteria cannot be easily linked to any one
particular principal curricular criterion, they are coded [M] for multiple curricular references to principal criteria as well as additional evaluative factors.

The criterion “Writing Ability” was invoked by two evaluator pairs: Pair 2 used the criterion “Writing Ability/Skill Level/Attitude/Potential of Students (8%),” and Pair 4 used the criterion “Writing Ability of Student (6%).” This criterion refers to students’ readiness for English 112 depending upon their perceived writing and/or cognitive strengths. The criterion “Can Go” was invoked by two evaluator pairs: Pair 3 used the criterion “Can Go/Could Go/Talked Up/Talked Down/Bump It Up (6%),” and Pair 4 used the criterion “Can/Could Do/Go (4%).” In general, this criterion refers to evaluators’ willingness and/or desire to be talked into English 112 placement decisions.

**Supporting Research Question 1:** How will identifying evaluators’ rhetorical values more clearly define the curricular boundaries between courses within the sequence?

In this section, the degree to which evaluators used two principal criteria in making placement decisions for borderline essays (essays that exhibit characteristics of the two adjacent placement categories English 110/English 111 or English 111/English 112) are discussed. As discussed in the previous section, the Placement Program’s training session (June 8, 2006) and norming sessions (June 19 and June 28, 2006) defined factors that should determine whether a borderline English 110/English 111 essay should be placed into English 110 or English 111 and whether a borderline English 111/English 112 essay should be placed into English 111 or English 112. According to placement training and norming sessions, for an English 110/English 111 borderline essay, the severity of errors of writing weaknesses, such as serious weaknesses in grammar, usage, mechanics, essay structure, syntax, and audience awareness, may indicate an English 110 placement. However, for a borderline English 111 or English 112 essay, the
sophistication of writing, such as strong or solid essay structure, word choice, argument, metadiscourse, sentence structure, and development, may indicate a 112 placement.

With regard to this curricular criterion “Severity,” the use of this criterion in making 110 placement decisions was compared overall with only the borderline discussions. Overall, negligible differences were noted: Pair 1 used the criterion “Enough Problems (0.5%)” overall compared to the same criterion “Enough Problems (< 0.5%)” during borderline discussions; Pair 2 used the criterion “Severity/Amount of Stuff/Enough Things (6%)” overall compared to the same criterion “Severity/Amount of Stuff/Enough Things (5%)” during borderline discussions; Pair 3 used the criterion “Severity/Pervasiveness (1%)” overall compared to the same criterion “Severity/Pervasiveness (0.5%)” during borderline discussions; and Pair 4 used the criterion “Severity/Enough (2%)” overall compared to same criterion “Severity/Enough (< 0.5%)” during borderline discussions.

With regard to this curricular criterion “Sophistication,” the use of this criterion in making 112 placement decisions was compared overall with only the borderline discussions. Again, insignificant differences were noted: Pair 1 used the criterion “Sophistication (1%)” overall compared to the same criterion “Sophistication (0.5%)” during borderline discussions; Pair 2 used the criterion “Sophistication (4%)” overall compared to the same criterion “Sophistication (4%)” during borderline discussions; Pair 3 used the criterion “Sophistication (3%)” overall compared to same criterion “Sophistication (3%)” during borderline discussions; and Pair 4 used the criterion “Sophistication (8%)” overall compared to the same criterion “Sophistication (7%)” during borderline discussions.
Supporting Research Question 2: How will the passage of time in the Placement Program affect readers’ rhetorical values and evaluative decisions with regard to the curriculum?

To examine the temporal effect on placement evaluators’ use of rhetorical criteria in placing essays, the frequency of placement decisions were calculated for two time periods: June 12 through June 22, 2006, and June 26 through July 19, 2006. In particular, the preponderance of principal curricular criteria evaluators used in the first time period was compared to the second half. With respect to data analysis, the study sought to determine if each placement evaluators’ ten most frequently used criteria overall were invoked in the first and second halves of the Placement Program with approximately the same frequency. In other words, to what extent did each pair invoke their ten most frequent criteria overall during the first and second halves of the placement reading sessions? With respect to each Dynamic Criteria Map, following each individual criterion, a “1st” in parenthesis indicates that the criterion was in the ten most frequently invoked criteria between June 12 and June 22, 2006; and a “2nd” indicates that the criterion was in the top ten most frequently invoked criteria between June 26 and July 19, 2006.

With respect to “Figure 1: English 110 Dynamic Criteria Map” (p. 105), for Pair 1, the criterion “Focus” was in the ten most frequently invoked criteria during the second half but not the first half. For Pair 2, the criteria “Paragraphs,” “Audience/Reader Awareness,” and “Clarity/Readability” were in the ten most frequently invoked criteria during the first half but not the second half. For Pair 3, the criterion “Article/Attribution/Quotation/Source Citations” was in the ten most frequently invoked criteria during the second half but not the first half, and the criterion “Benefit/Need” was not in the ten most frequently invoked criteria during the first or second halves. For Pair 4, the criteria “Focus/Off Track/Jumpy” and “Introduction/Conclusion”
were in the top ten most frequently invoked criteria during the first half but not the second half, and the criterion “Thesis” was in the ten most frequently invoked criteria during the second half but not the first half.

With respect to “Figure 2: English 111 Dynamic Criteria Map” (p. 106), for Pair 1, the criterion “Main Ideas/Supporting Ideas/Main Points/Supporting Points” was in the ten most frequently invoked criteria during the first half but not the second half. For Pair 2, the criteria “Introduction/Conclusion,” “Focus/Drift,” and “Writing Ability/Knowledge/Attitude of Students” were in the ten most frequently invoked criteria during the second half but not the first half, and the criteria “Paragraphs” and “Audience/Reader Awareness” were in the ten most frequently invoked criteria during the first half but not the second half. For Pair 3, the criteria “Introduction/Conclusion” and “Article/Author/Readings/Source Citations” were in the ten most frequently invoked criteria during the second half but not the first half, and the criteria “Clarity/Readability,” “Points,” and “Argument” were in the ten most frequently invoked criteria during the first half but not the second half. For Pair 4, the criterion “Focus/Jumps Around/Shifts” was in the ten most frequently invoked criteria during the second half but not the first half, and the criteria “Article/Author/Sources/Reading/Citations,” “Sophistication,” and “Thesis” were in the ten most frequently invoked criteria during the first half but not the second half.

With respect to “Figure 3: English 112 Dynamic Criteria Map” (p. 107), for Pair 1, the criterion “Clarity/Readability” was in the ten most frequently invoked criteria during the second half but not the first half. For Pair 2, the criteria “Article/Source” and “Critical Thinking” were in the ten most frequently invoked criteria during the second half but not the first half, and the criteria “Sophistication” and “Argument” were in the ten most frequently invoked criteria during the first half but not the second half. The pair’s criterion “Examples/Support/Use of Sources for
Support” was not in the ten most frequently invoked criteria during the first or second halves. For Pair 3, the criterion “Paragraphs” was in the ten most frequently invoked criteria during the second half but not the first half, and the criteria “Clarity/Readability” and “Weird/Strange/Odd” were in the top ten most frequently invoked criteria during the first half but not the second half. For Pair 4, the criteria “Metadiscourse/Transitions,” “Can/Could Do/Go,” and “Strong/Solid” were in the top ten most frequently invoked criteria during the first half but not the second half.

Supporting Research Question 3: To what extent will placement evaluators rely upon Broad’s (2003) contextual criteria in making placement decisions?

Supporting Research Question 3 sought to determine the extent to which placement evaluators relied upon their teaching experiences to employ contextual criteria that invoked Broad’s (2003) “constructing writers” contextual criteria category, such as “imagined details” or “the fictional portrayals of student authors’ lives” (p. 89) in making placement decisions. In order to ascertain evaluators’ use of the contextual criteria “constructing writers,” all in vivo examples were separated into textual and contextual categories. Again, textual criteria are “qualities or features of the text being judged” and contextual criteria involve “issues not directly related to the text being judged” (Broad, 2003, p. 34). Broad (2003) classified portfolio evaluators’ decisions into three principal categories: “textual qualities,” “textual features,” and “contextual criteria.” “Textual qualities” were rhetorical values based on “descriptive traits” of essays, which involved the instructors’ “intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic engagement with a text” (p. 38). “Textual features” were rhetorical values based upon criteria that can “be physically pointed to,” such as “mechanics,” “length,” “topics,” and “sentence variety” (pp. 38, 62). Overall, “contextual criteria” focused on how “pedagogical, ethical, collegial, and other
aspects of the environment surrounding students’ texts guided and shaped evaluators’ decisions” (p. 73).

In this study, criteria were divided into two principal categories: textual and contextual criteria. To expedite this study’s analysis, no distinction was made between textual qualities and textual features; textual criteria were defined as decisions based upon the textual qualities and features of the placement essays being assessed. In other words, both textual qualities and features were combined in this analysis. With regard to contextual criteria, this study found that evaluators employed Broad’s “constructing writers” contextual criteria; instructors “inferred, imagined, or simply assumed ‘facts’ about a student-author and her composition processes” (pp. 89-90). This study found that evaluators made contextual decisions based upon the “constructing writers” contextual criteria: evaluators perceived student writers’ skills, needs, abilities, and/or attitudes. However, placement evaluators also inferred, imagined, or assumed other instructors’ ability to teach students in the program’s writing courses, and evaluators expressed how they perceived themselves as evaluators.

The majority of criteria within the Dynamic Criteria Maps have both textual and contextual properties. In each Dynamic Criteria Map, an asterisk (*) has been placed after each criterion having both textual and contextual definitions. Two asterisks (**) have been placed after each criterion that has a solely contextual meaning. According to “Figure 1: English 110 Dynamic Criteria Map” (p. 105), thirty-two out of the forty criteria evaluators used had contextual properties; according to “Figure 2: English 111 Dynamic Criteria Map” (p. 106), thirty-three out of the forty criteria evaluators used had contextual properties; and according to “Figure 3: English 112 Dynamic Criteria Map” (p. 107), thirty-four out of the forty criteria evaluators used had contextual properties. Some criteria were solely contextual: five criteria in
“Figure 1: English 110 Dynamic Criteria Map” (p. 105) were exclusively contextual; two criteria in “Figure 2: English 111 Dynamic Criteria Map” (p. 106) were exclusively contextual; and four criteria in the “Figure 3: English 112 Dynamic Criteria Map” (p. 107) were exclusively contextual.

To further demonstrate criteria that have textual and contextual meanings of criteria, several examples follow with respect to the Dynamic Criteria Maps. With respect to “Figure 1: English 110 Dynamic Criteria Map” (p. 105), Pair 1’s most frequently invoked criterion “Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions” contains both textual and contextual meanings. With respect to this criterion, the textual meaning emphasizes the textual properties of the placement essays: “Essays contain awkward sentence constructions, sentence boundary errors, lack of sentence variety, choppy sentences, and/or disorganized sentences.” The contextual meaning emphasizes the skills writers need to improve regarding this criterion: “Writers need work recognizing sentence boundaries and combining sentences.” In each placement category, most criteria exhibit both textual and contextual properties. Nevertheless, some criteria exhibited only contextual criteria; the remainder of this discussion focuses on the exclusively contextual criteria employed in the Dynamic Criteria Maps.

According to “Figure 1: English 110 Dynamic Criteria Map” (p. 105), one exclusively contextual criterion invoked the secondary curricular criterion “Extra Attention/Extra Time.” As discussed earlier, in “Figure 1: English 110 Dynamic Criteria Map” (p. 104), Pair 1 used the criterion “Benefit/Need/Help (5.5%)”; Pair 2 used the criterion “Benefit/Need/Ready For/Gain (4%)”; and Pair 3 used the criterion “Benefit/Need (3%).” Again, this criterion refers to the students need for extra help in English 110 with severe and/or pervasive writing weaknesses. For instance, Pair 2’s criterion “Benefit/Need/Ready For/Gain” is defined as the following: “Writers
would benefit from extra time in English 110, time at the Writing Center and professor’s office, time revising, time reading the handbook, and time working on sentence level and syntactical concerns.” Pair 1 also invoked the criterion “Benefit/Need/Help/Extra Time (6%)” in English 112 placement decisions. According to this criterion, “writers may not benefit much from extra time or need extra work in English 111.” Overall, for this particular criterion, evaluators reflected on writers’ perceived needs with regard to specific writing classes.

Pair 3 frequently invoked another exclusively contextual criterion in all three placement categories--English 110, English 111, and English 112--and is represented in all three maps. Pair 3 used the criterion “Talked Up/Talked Into/Can Go/Could Go/Can Live With (9%)” in English 110, the criterion “Can Live With/Could Live With/Can Go/Could Go/Talked Down/Talked Into/Talked Up (5%)” in English 111, and the criterion “Can Go/Could Go/Talked Up/Talked Down/Bump It Up (6%)” in English 112. According to the 110 definition of this criterion, “evaluators indicate a willingness and/or desire to be talked into English 110 or English 111 placements or to settle on particular placement decisions based upon uncertainty or other factors.” With respect to this criterion, Pair 4 evaluators exhibited uncertainty in their initial placement decisions in each placement category, and/or a desire to be persuaded into making particular placement decisions. Pair 4 also frequently used the criterion “Can/Could Do/Go (4%)” for English 112 placements, which similarly referred to “a willingness and/or desire to go up or down on particular placement decisions.” Overall, this criterion emphasizes an individual and collaborative assessment dynamic of placement readers.

Another frequently invoked contextual criterion focused on evaluators’ perceptions of student writers’ abilities. Pair 2 used the criterion “Writing Ability/Knowledge/Attitude of Students (3.5%)” in English 111 placement decisions and the criterion “Writing Ability/Skill
Level/Attitude/Potential of Students (8%)” in English 112 placement decisions. In English 110 placement decisions, Pair 4 used the criterion “Writing Ability of Student (3%).” With regard to this criterion generally, pairs used this criterion in referring to writers that they perceived may have problems or succeed in courses, writers that may be struggling or are careless writers, or writers that may be struggling with development and sentence breaks. For this criterion, evaluator pairs perceived students’ attitudes (“laziness” or “carelessness”) and abilities (“may struggle with development and sentence breaks” or “will struggle”). Finally, Pair 4 used the contextual criterion “Entertaining/Fun/Interesting/Liked (5%)” as the sixth most invoked criteria in 112 placement decisions. According to this criterion, “evaluators liked essays and found them to be entertaining, interesting, fun to read, and/or enjoyable.” This criterion emphasized the evaluators’ emotional or aesthetic response to the placement essays.

Supporting Research Questions 4: What rhetorical values will placement evaluators use to place essays written in non-persuasive genres or that match curricular exemplars?

Transcripts were coded for the following criteria: essays written by ESL learners, essays written off-prompt or off-topic, and essays that matched curricular exemplars or model essays in the program. These criteria were present but not significantly; none of these criteria were frequently cited. In English 110 placement decisions, no pair invoked any of these criteria more than 2% of the time. In English 111 placement decisions, no pair invoked any of these criteria more than 1.5% of the time. In English 112 placement decisions, no pair invoked any of these criteria more than 3% of the time. In the codebooks in “Appendix B: Study’s Data and Results, pp. 268-654, these criteria are referenced as (RQ7) and (RQ8). The reference (RQ 7) refers to Supporting Research Questions 4, and the reference (RQ 8) refers to Supporting Research Question 5.
Pair 1 used a criterion frequently in English 110 and English 111 placement decisions that referred to non-persuasive elements of placement essays. In English 110 placement decisions, Pair 1 used the criterion “Narrative/Stories/Personal Stories/Self-Centered,” which is defined textually as narratives and stories that “are self-centered or focused primarily on the writers’ experiences,” which “do not support the main idea or point of the essays,” and contextually as “writers will need help in English 110 to help them with the narrative.” In English 111 placement decisions, Pair 1 used the criterion “Narrative/Personal,” which is defined textual as “essay support is narrative and based upon personal experiences and examples” and contextually as “students will not use narrative in the writing classes because the writing program does not emphasize narrative.” Overall, Pair 1 noted that writers’ use of narrative, rather than the narrative genre, was not being used appropriately or persuasively in their essays. Other pairs used similar criteria but less frequently; no other pairs used this criterion enough for inclusion into the Dynamic Criteria Maps.

Discussion

The purpose of this section is to present a focused constructivist content validation argument --four validation-argument questions for the Placement Program to consider--to strengthen the relationship between the Placement Program’s CWA practices and the writing program’s curriculum. After educators collect and analyze their data, Broad (2003) asserted that “maps of rhetorical criteria” should be published to facilitate “high-powered professional discussions” in order to understand not only “how” instructors value writing but how they “should” value writing. Broad presented his “Dynamic Criteria Map” to City University along with four questions which “highlighted those dynamics” that “required debate” (p. 133). In his presentation to City University, he asked the following question: “How should perceptions of
learning, progress, and growth figure into judgments of students’ rhetorical performances” (see “Debating and Negotiating Evaluative Differences,” Broad, 2003, pp. 133-134)?

This section provides the Placement Program’s administrators with four validation-argument questions, each of which presents a question for discussion and/or debate to the Placement Program’s administrators; therefore, the goal of this section is to present clear and reasoned questions for consideration and/or deliberation. Auerbach and Silverstein (2003) argued that in order for the data analysis to be justifiable, the results must be both “communicable” and “coherent.” In the case of this study, “communicability” means that the criteria categories or thematic “constructs” can “be understood by, and make sense to, other researchers and to the research participants themselves” (p. 84). “Coherent” means that “the theoretical constructs”—this study’s Dynamic Criteria Maps and codebooks—“produce coherent ideas...that fit into an organized theoretical narrative” (p. 85). Each validation-argument question is grounded in the study’s results and grew out of the findings of the principal research question or supporting research questions. As a result, this section endeavors to present “communicable” and “coherent” questions organized according to the principal and supporting research questions. Because the findings for Supporting Research Question 1 were inconclusive, however, no question is provided for the Placement Program with respect to these findings.

**Principal Research Question:** To what extent will evaluators’ rhetorical values and placement decisions exhibit constructivist content validity?

**Validation-Argument Question 1:** How can Placement Program training continue to strengthen the explicit connection between the writing program’s principal curricular criteria and the placement readers’ evaluative practices and deemphasize evaluative dynamics that weaken this relationship?
The goal of the data collection and analysis was to determine the preponderance of rhetorical values or criteria invoked by placement evaluators and to establish how well these rhetorical values supported curricular criteria. The four placement evaluators used a variety of criteria in making English 110, English 111, and English 112 placement decisions. Many criteria were used in the same discussions, and some criteria were used simultaneously within the same statements; for instance, some lines or words contained evaluative factors that could be classified into multiple criteria categories. During a training session, Gina (personal communication, June 8, 2006) explained that placement evaluators must consider “multiple indicators of quality” at the same time. However, the objective of the study was to study and make connections among pairs’ rhetorical dynamics.

Broad (personal communication, October 6, 2006) explained that DCM “uses social and deliberative (in the Aristotelian sense) rhetorical dynamics to bring to light latent rhetorical values and get people to negotiate them collaboratively” which foregrounds a “social-epistemic framework.” While it was not possible for this study to bring to light or classify every rhetorical value or criterion, this study sought to uncover the evaluative dynamics of placement readers’ values or criteria—the evaluative values or criteria used socially, deliberatively, and rhetorically—and to influence these dynamics to better reflect the writing program’s curriculum.

Based upon the findings, pairs’ evaluative dynamics reflected principal curricular criteria. With regard to English 110 placements, often two or more evaluator pairs frequently invoked four of the six principal curricular criteria: “Audience,” “Organization/Theme/Structure,” “Development,” and “Sentence Structure.” One or more evaluator pairs invoked all three secondary curricular criteria: “Extra Attention/Extra Time,” “Source Use,” and “Extra Attention/Extra Time.” Evaluator pairs also used the criteria “Paragraphs,”
“Clarity/Readability,” and “Introduction/Conclusion” that elicited multiple references to principal curricular criteria.

With regard to English 111 placements, often two or more evaluator pairs frequently invoked four of the six principal curricular criteria: “Audience,” “Organization/Theme/Structure,” “Development,” and “Sentence Structure.” One or more evaluator pairs invoked two of three secondary curricular criteria: “Source Use” and “Early Stages of Sophistication.” Evaluator pairs also used the criteria “Paragraphs,” “Clarity/Readability,” “Introduction/Conclusion,” and “Repetition,” which elicited multiple references to principal curricular criteria.

Concerning English 112 placements, two or more evaluator pairs frequently invoked five of the six principal curricular criteria: “Audience,” “Organization/Theme/Structure,” “Development,” “Sentence Structure,” and “Word Choice.” One or more evaluator pairs invoked two of three secondary curricular criteria: “Critical Thinking,” “Sophistication,” and “Source Use/Synthesis of Sources.” Evaluator pairs also used the criteria “Paragraphs” and “Clarity/Readability,” criteria which elicited multiple references to principal curricular criteria.

In view of these results, evaluators’ explicit references to the two principal curricular criteria “Grammar-Usage-Mechanics” and “Word Choice” were noticeable. However, the absence of these curricular criteria was due to various factors noted after the analyses. “Grammar-Usage-Mechanics” actually overlapped with the principal curricular criterion “Sentence Structure”; strengths or weaknesses in grammar, usage, and mechanics were demonstrated in strong or weak sentence structure. In addition, grammar, usage, and mechanics issues were either invoked as the “Grammar/Usage/Mechanics” criterion, or these issues encompassed a variety of other criteria placement evaluators used. This study defined many separate criteria, which comprised grammar, usage, or mechanics issues, such as the criteria
“Fragments,” “Run Ons,” “Spelling,” “Capitalization,” “Comma Splices,” and “Punctuation.”

However, this study did not connect these criteria prior to the dynamic criteria mapping analysis.

Even though the criterion “Word Choice” was invoked in Pair 3’s criterion “Vocabulary (4.5%),” this criterion also encompassed a variety of other criteria placement evaluators used, such as “Homonyms,” “Clichés,” “Vocabulary,” “Playing with Language,” and “Language Control,” and the study did not connect these criteria before the dynamic criteria mapping analysis. However, if these separate criteria were combined, the two broad principal curricular criteria “Grammar-Usage-Mechanics” and “Word Choice” would be well-represented in placement discussions for each placement category, and they would likely be included in several lists citing the ten most frequently used criteria. A qualifying statement has been included in each Dynamic Criteria Map’s “Curricular Criteria Key” to recognize this issue.

Validation-Argument Question 1, then, asks Placement Program administrators to consider strategies for strengthening the connection between the writing program’s principal curricular criteria and the placement readers’ evaluative practices. The training could continue to emphasize the six principal curricular criteria while deemphasizing criteria that may weaken this assessment-curriculum bond; therefore, administrators of the Placement Program could identify textual and contextual criteria that may weaken this connection.

Evaluators could be encouraged to use criteria that are clearly connected to the curriculum, such as the principal curricular criteria. However, a few key criteria used by evaluators, identified in the three Dynamic Criteria Maps, exhibited ambiguity and/or were not explicitly linked to the curriculum. In English 110 and English 111 placement decisions, Pair 3 used the contextual “Talked Up/Talked Into/Can Go/Could Go/Can Live With (9%)” and “Can
Live With/Could Live With/Can Go/Could Go/Talked Down/Talked Into/Talked Up (5%),” which often expressed an uncertainty and/or complacency in making placement decisions.

Other criteria were not clearly related to the curriculum. Pair 4 used the criterion “Weird/Odd/Strange (8%),” which generally referred to “paragraphs, spelling, theses, introductions, conclusions, punctuation, source use, and/or sentence constructions” that were “weird, odd, and/or strange.” Finally, Pair 4 frequently used the criterion “Entertaining/ Fun/Interesting/Liked (5%),” which referred to how “evaluators liked essays and found them to be entertaining, interesting, fun to read, and/or enjoyable.” Regarding both of these criteria, weirdness and likeability cannot be easily connected to curricular values. Evaluators used such criteria to a lesser degree throughout the Placement Program, so the program could address these criteria in training--particularly those vague criteria used frequently in placement decisions--in order to more clearly define and link them to curricular values.

Supporting Research Question 1: How will identifying evaluators’ rhetorical values more clearly define the curricular boundaries between courses within the sequence?

The degree to which evaluators used the criterion “Severity” in making placement decisions involving borderline English 110/English 111 placement discussions, and the degree to which evaluators used the criterion “Sophistication” in making placement decisions involving borderline English 111/English 112 placements discussions could not be determined. In both instances, evaluators used both criteria with approximately the same frequency in borderline discussions as in overall discussions. After the analysis, it was noted that a comparison between the use of these criteria in borderline discussions and the remaining discussions would have provided a more useful comparison than between borderline discussions and overall discussions.
The results did not more clearly define the curricular values between courses within the course sequence; as a result, no validation-argument question can be offered based upon these results.

**Supporting Research Question 2**: How will the passage of time in the Placement Program affect readers’ rhetorical values and evaluative decisions with regard to the curriculum?

**Validation-Argument Question 2**: Since evaluators’ placement criteria fluctuate over time, how can the Placement Coordinator gauge evaluative dynamics to help readers refocus their evaluative practices on curricular values?

This study is not able to explain why evaluative shifts happened over time, but evaluative shifts did occur, which provides valuable information for training purposes. Some criteria that appeared in the criteria lists for the first half of the Placement Program (June 12-June 22) but not in the criteria lists for the second half (June 26-July 19) of the Placement Program (and vice versa) were near the bottom of the ten most frequently invoked criteria lists.

Regarding English 110 placement decisions, criteria used by one or more evaluator pairs that appeared in the ten most frequently invoked criteria list in the first half but not in the second half included the criteria “Paragraphs,” “Audience/Reader Awareness,” “Focus/Off Track/Jumpy,” and “Introduction/Conclusion.” Criteria used by one or more evaluators that appeared in the ten most frequently invoked criteria list in the first half but not in the second half included the criteria “Focus,” “Article/Attribution/Quotation/Source Citations,” and “Thesis.”

Concerning English 111 placement decisions, criteria used by one or more evaluator pairs that appeared in the ten most frequently invoked criteria list in the first half but not in the second half included the criteria “Main Ideas/Supporting Ideas/Main Points/Supporting Points,” “Paragraphs,” “Audience/Reader Awareness,” “Introduction/Conclusion,” “Article/Author/Readings/Source Citations,” “Clarity/Readability,” “Points,” “Argument,” “Sophistication,” and
“Thesis.” Criteria used by one or more evaluators that appeared in the ten most frequently invoked criteria list in the second half but not in the first half included the criteria “Introduction/Conclusion,” “Focus/Drift,” “Writing Ability/Knowledge/Attitude of Students,” “Article/Author/Readings/Source Citations,” and “Focus/Jumps Around/Shifts.”

Pertaining to English 112 placement decisions, criteria used by one or more evaluators that appeared in the ten most frequently invoked criteria list in the first half but not in the second half included the criteria “Sophistication,” “Argument,” “Clarity/Readability,” “Weird/Strange/Odd,” “Metadiscourse/Transitions,” “Can/Could Do/Go,” and “Strong/Solid.” Criteria used by one or more evaluators that appeared in the ten most frequently invoked criteria list in the second half but not in the first half included the criteria “Clarity/Readability,” “Article/Source,” “Critical Thinking,” and “Paragraphs.” However, the criterion “Examples/Support/Use of Sources for Support” was not in the top ten most frequently invoked criteria for either the first or second halves.

Because the Placement Program would not have time to identify evaluative shifts using this study’s methods, it could be taken for granted that such changes occur, and Placement Program administrators could address potential changes. However, sample placement essays could be assessed according to Broad’s (2003) articulation session method in order to identify “rhetorical criteria (textual, contextual, and other) informing judgments of students’ writing” (p. 131). Placement administrators could then discuss these criteria with placement evaluators to refocus their evaluative practices on curricular values.

**Supporting Research Question 3:** To what extent will placement evaluators rely upon Broad’s (2003) contextual criteria in making placement decisions?
Validation-Argument Question 3: How can Placement Program training recognize and distinguish between textual and contextual evaluative criteria? In addition, how can training distinguish between inappropriate contextual criteria, criteria not explicitly connected to curricular values, and appropriate contextual criteria, criteria which encourage evaluative practices based upon curricular values?

Placement Program training could more explicitly focus on the distinction between textual and contextual criteria and encourage productive contextual criteria. Broad’s (1997, 2000, 2003) studies and other prominent studies in exit assessment (see Haswell, 1998, 2001a, 2001b; Huot 1993) have established that contextual factors, factors outside of the actual text, influence assessment decisions. Even in this study, a study that focused exclusively on placement assessment, evaluators read essays cold--without any prior knowledge of the writers--yet they still used a variety of contextual criteria that invoked images of the writers.

Unfortunately, the contextual nature of evaluative criteria has often been traditionally ignored or deemphasized in training and norming sessions and assessment practices in order to minimize evaluators’ idiosyncratic assessment practices. In other words, contextual criteria--criteria not specifically focused on textual properties--have been seen to interfere with the norming and calibration processes. However, contextual criteria will not impede such processes if used appropriately. While some contextual criteria may be idiosyncratic, many are not, just as many textual criteria.

Appropriate contextual criteria--criteria that connect assessment with curricular principals--could be identified and employed in placement assessment. This study identified major types of criteria which have contextual meanings--exclusively contextual criteria that strengthen the bond between the assessment and curriculum, exclusively contextual criteria that
weaken the bond between the assessment and curriculum, and criteria that contain both textual and contextual meanings that strengthen the bond between the assessment and curriculum and/or do not strengthen the bond between the assessment and curriculum.

Placement Program training emphasized the use of the secondary curricular criteria “Extra Attention/Extra Time” in English 110 placement decisions; this criterion is an exclusively contextual criterion because it focuses on the needs of student writers and the instruction and resources they can obtain. Even though such a judgment is based upon the text, evaluators extrapolate whether the student writers need one-on-one instruction and extra time with an English 110 instructor to improve their writing skills. “Extra Attention/Extra Time” is a useful and appropriate contextual criterion because it connects assessment to teaching, and consequently, the curriculum.

Other exclusively contextual criteria focused on evaluators’ perceptions of student writers’ abilities and teachers’ abilities. In referring to writers’ abilities, Pair 2 used the criterion “Writing Ability/Knowledge/Attitude of Students (3.5%)” in English 111 placement decisions and the criterion “Writing Ability/Skill Level/Attitude/Potential of Students (8%)” in English 112 placement decisions. Pair 2 also used criteria to refer to teachers’ ability to assist students. With less frequency, the pair used the criterion “Ability/Responsiveness of Instructors (0.5%)” in English 110 placement decisions and “Ability Responsiveness of Instructors (2%)” in English 111 placement decisions.

According to the criteria that referred to students’ writing abilities, Pair 2 discussed how writers’ essays indicated a skill level that may cause them to have trouble, to struggle, or to succeed in English 111 or English 112. With regard to the criteria that referred to instructors’ teaching abilities, the pair discussed how English 110 or English 111 instructors possess the
ability to help writers with various difficulties, such as sentence-level errors, readability, proofreading, and grammar, due to their pedagogical training. However, concerning the students’ writing abilities, Pair 2 also conjectured about the lack of work ethic by some writers. When the pair made connections between writers’ perceived skill level and perceived success or lack of success in writing courses, and when the pair made connections between the writers’ perceived writing weaknesses and the perceived ability of instructors to help address these weaknesses, the contextual criteria were being used constructively and appropriately to strengthen the bond between the assessment and curriculum. However, the evaluators’ assumptions about writers’ perceived work ethics are not useful for two reasons: writers’ work ethic cannot be determined, and such information does not provide any pertinent information about the students’ writing skills with respect to the curriculum.

Some other exclusively contextual criteria are not useful for strengthening the bond between assessment and curriculum. For instance, Pair 3 frequently used the criterion “Talked Up/Talked Into/Can Go/Could Go/Can Live With (9%)” in English 110 placement decisions, the criterion “Can Live With/Could Live With/Can Go/Could Go/Talked Down/Talked Into/Talked Up (5%)” in English 111 placement decisions, and the criterion Can Go/Could Go/Talked Up/Talked Down/Bump It Up (6%)” in English 112 placement decisions. As previously discussed, the evaluators used these criteria to express reluctance in their placement decisions, a desire to be persuaded into making other placement decisions, or a resignation to placement decisions. At the heart of these criteria is a dynamic that emphasizes evaluative uncertainty, a dynamic that does not make explicit the connection between evaluative practices and the curriculum. Likewise, Pair 4’s contextual criterion “Entertaining/Fun/Interesting/Liked (5%)” does not provide information linking the evaluative judgment to the curriculum. In other words,
when evaluators placed essays based upon reactions to essays, it was not clear how such responses reflected key curricular criteria.

Many evaluative criteria, however, exhibited both textual and contextual properties. This study found that criteria, which demonstrated both textual and contextual meanings, exhibited useful or useless contextual aspects. For example, in English 112 placement decisions, Pair 2 used the criterion “Counterargument,” which had both textual and contextual meanings. According to the textual use of this criterion, “essays contain counterarguments.” With respect to the contextual use of this criterion, “writers demonstrate knowledge of counterarguments, which they will not need to learn in English 111.” The pair used the criterion “Argument” in English 112 placement decisions, which had both textual and contextual meanings. With respect to the textual use of this criterion, “essays contain good, overstated, hidden, strong, subtle, effective, and/or ineffective arguments.” According to the contextual use of this criterion, “the online placement test’s instructions impede writers’ arguments.” In both instances, the textual definitions contain information about the strengths and/or weaknesses of the criterion “Counterargument” and “Argument,” which can be connected to the curriculum.

The contextual definition of “Counterargument” is useful whereas the contextual definition of “Argument” is not. With respect to the contextual meaning of “Counterargument,” an explicit connection is made between the writers’ knowledge of counterargument and the curriculum: Counterargument is taught in English 111, the student already knows how to construct a counterargument, so the student does not need English 111 to learn counter-argumentation skills. On the other hand, the contextual meaning of “Argument” does not connect the writers’ skills to the curriculum: The online placement test’s instructions are blamed for writers’ weak arguments. In such a supposition, there is no connection between writers’
skills and the curriculum. Therefore, such a contextual application provides no useful information for assessment even though this observation may be helpful in revising the online writing placement test.

Placement Program training could build upon its strengths in emphasizing contextual criteria, such as “Extra Attention/Extra Time,” by discussing appropriate and inappropriate uses of both textual and contextual evaluative criteria. Again, Broad’s (2003 p. 131) articulation sessions could be used to provide an overview of the criteria evaluators are using and to identify contextual and textual meanings of criteria. Then Placement Program administrators could analyze these contextual and textual meanings and address pertinent criteria with evaluators. Discussions could distinguish between inappropriate contextual criteria, criteria not explicitly connected to curricular values, and appropriate contextual criteria, criteria which encourage evaluative practices based upon curricular values.

**Supporting Research Questions 4**: What rhetorical values will placement evaluators use to place essays written in non-persuasive genres or that match curricular exemplars?

**Validation-Argument Question 4**: How can Placement Program training further emphasize how to assess the use of narrative and/or personal experiences in support of argumentation, a criterion related to the principal curricular criterion “Audience”?

As noted in the “Findings” section (pp. 114-134), the only notable criteria that emerged with respect to this research question involved the use of narrative. In English 110 placement decisions, Pair 1 used the criterion “Narrative/Stories/Personal Stories/Self-Centered (3.5%),” which is defined textually as narratives and stories that “are self-centered or focused primarily on the writers’ experiences, and the narratives do not support the main idea or point of the essays.” In English 111 placement decisions, Pair 1 used the criterion “Narrative/Personal (3%),” which
is defined textually as the “essay support is narrative and based upon personal experiences and examples.” In both of these examples, the contrast is apparent: English 110 placement essays contained narrative that did not support argumentation, and English 111 placement essays contained narrative that supported persuasive curricular goals. Other pairs used similar criteria but less frequently; no other pairs used this criterion enough for inclusion into the Dynamic Criteria Maps.

Similar criteria emerged as evaluative criteria for other pairs to a much lesser degree. In English 110 placement decisions, Pair 3 used the criterion “Narrative (1%),” and Pair 4 used the criterion “Narration (< 0.5%).” In English 111 placements, Pair 2 used the criterion “Narrative (0.5%)”; Pair 3 used the criterion “Narrative (< 0.5%)”; and Pair 4 used the criterion “Narrative/Narration/Personal (0.5%).” In English 112 placement decisions, Pair 2 used the criterion “Narrative (< 0.5%),” and Pair 4 used the criterion “Personal Experiences (1.5%).” With respect to English 110 placement decisions, Pair 4 used the criterion “Narrative (1%),” defined textually as “essays include too much narrative, which is not used well.” With respect to English 111 placements, the pair used the criterion “Narrative/Narration/Personal (0.5%),” defined textually as “essays include narrative and personal experiences for support” and contextually as “writers do not demonstrate proficiency with using personal examples in their essays, which excludes them from English 112.” With respect to English 112 placements, the pair used the criterion “Personal Experiences (1.5%),” defined textually as “essays contain effective or cool personal experiences” and contextually as “writers draw upon personal experiences for amplification of points.” Pair 4’s use of these criteria demonstrated that the effective use of narrative and/or personal experience increases with each placement category.
In Placement Program training sessions, a continued and more vigorous focus on the appropriate use of narrative could be emphasized. According to the *Placement Evaluators’ Handbook 2006-07*, “while narrative (storytelling) can be used in an effective argument, an essay that takes an exclusively narrative approach to the topic without taking a clear position and presenting relevant evidence in support of a focused thesis should be placed no higher than 111 so that the writer may learn the basics of effective academic argument” (p. 11). Discussions of narrative could be grounded within the context of argumentation, a criterion related to the principal curricular criterion “Audience.” In particular, placement administrators could provide more nuanced narrative criteria and discuss how the use of narrative may improve in effectiveness in support of argumentation in all three placement categories.

Ultimately, placement evaluators could be encouraged to assess narrative in support of argumentation rather than view narrative as a separate genre. For instance, Pair 1 used the criterion “Narrative/Stories/Personal Stories/Self-Centered” contextually as “writers will need help in English 110 to help them with the narrative” in making English 110 placements. For English 111 placements, the pair used the criterion “Narrative/Stories/Personal Stories/Self-Centered” contextually as “students will not use narrative in the writing classes because the writing program does not emphasize narrative.” In both of these instances, the contextual meanings are connected to curricular values and illustrate that although the narrative genre is not taught in the program, using narrative in support of argumentation can be valued.

While Chapter Four provided the final details concerning the study’s research participants, data collection procedures, data analysis protocols, results, and discussion of these results with respect to the GSW writing program, “Chapter Five: Conclusion and Theoretical and Pedagogical Applications of Study” moves beyond the scope of this dissertation research to
discuss this study’s theoretical and pedagogical applications for administrators in the writing assessment field. Consequently, Chapter Five presents the theoretical and pedagogical applications of the dissertation study’s validated claim: This chapter presents the main argument that justifies the applicability of DCM to placement assessment research (see the section “Validation of Employing…,” pp. 151-153); discusses the constraints of the study for writing program administrators interested in using DCM at their institutions and describes Broad’s (2003, pp. 130-134) streamlined DCM approach (see the section “Study Limitations…,” pp. 153-156); provides ten simplified, efficient applications for employing the dissertation study in placement assessment contexts (see the section “DCM Heuristic…,” pp. 156-183); identifies the current obstacles posed by the federal government and corporations to DCM research and presents ten questions for writing program administrators to consider before implementing DCM (see the section “Political Impediments…,” pp. 183-191); and discusses the prospects for the revision, publication, and/or continuation of this dissertation study and the implications this study poses for researchers in the writing assessment field (see the section “Implications…,” pp. 191-197).
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND THEORETICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL APPLICATIONS OF STUDY

Introduction

The objective of “Chapter Five: Conclusion and Theoretical and Pedagogical Applications of Study” is to present the theoretical and pedagogical applications of the dissertation’s central claim in the study: Broad’s (2003) DCM research model can be adapted to provide a focused validation argument to strengthen the GSW Placement Program’s constructivist content validity, the relationship between the Placement Program’s communal writing assessment (CWA) practices and the writing program’s curriculum. This dissertation study validated the assumption that DCM can be used to study and understand placement assessment practices, and consequently, to improve placement procedures to better reflect curricular criteria and goals.

Chapter Five presents five major sections. The first section (“Validation of Employing DCM…,” pp. 151-153) provides the argument, while referring to key discussions and findings throughout the dissertation, which justifies the applicability of DCM to placement assessment research. The second section (“Study Limitations and Broad’s Streamlined DCM Application,” pp. 153-156) discusses the limitations of the study for writing program administrators interested in using DCM at their institutions and describes Broad’s (2003, pp. 130-134) streamlined DCM approach—a more focused, efficient form of qualitative research—in collecting and analyzing data. The third section (“DCM Heuristic…,” pp. 156-183) presents ten simplified, efficient applications for employing the dissertation study in placement assessment contexts. These approaches adapted Broad’s (2003, pp. 130-134) streamlined DCM techniques in collecting, analyzing, and presenting data, and these applications provide writing program administrators
with a general heuristic for investigating the evaluative values or criteria of their placement program’s assessment practices. The fourth section (“Political Impediments and DCM Implementation Strategies,” pp. 183-191) identifies current obstacles posed by the federal government and corporations to DCM research and provides ten queries for writing program administrators planning to implement DCM; these questions ask administrators to gauge their own readiness and willingness to implement the DCM research model. Finally, the fifth section (“Implications for Further Research,” pp. 191-197) discusses possibilities for the revision, publication, and/or continuation of this dissertation study (or other DCM studies) in placement assessment, and this section concludes with implications this study poses for researchers in the writing assessment field.

Validation of Employing DCM to Study Placement Evaluation

This study validated the hypothesis that Broad’s (2003) DCM research model can be used to study and to understand placement assessment practices, and consequently, to improve placement procedures to greater reflect curricular criteria and goals. The chapters of this dissertation study substantiated and affirmed the study’s principal claim: Broad’s (2003) DCM research model can be adapted to provide a focused validation argument to strengthen the GSW Placement Program’s constructivist content validity, the relationship between the GSW Placement Program’s CWA practices and the GSW curriculum.

“Chapter Two: Theoretical Rationale for the DCM Research Model” validated this principal claim with a comprehensive review of research in exit and placement assessment: This chapter’s “Review of Research” established the currency of the DCM research model in exit assessment theory and pedagogy (see the sections “Paradigm Shift . . .,” pp. 10-14 and “Social Constructivist . . .,” pp. 14-18); illustrated the applicability of the DCM research model for
examining placement assessment practices (see the sections “Theory of Complementarity…,” pp. 18-22 and “Applicability of Exit Assessment Theory…,” pp. 22-32); and most significantly, demonstrated the germaneness of adapting the DCM research model for studying the constructivist content validity of the Placement Program (see the sections “Focused Constructivist Content Validity Inquiry…,” pp. 32-41 and “The First Three Generations…,” pp. 41-50).

“Chapter Three: Overview of the Study” supported this principal claim with an overview of the setting and historical context of the study and the study’s initial research questions and methodology based upon the pilot study: This chapter’s “Setting of the Study” section, pp. 52-64, described the setting and historical context of the study (see the sections “Participant-Observer Ethnographer,” pp. 53-56, “Historical Overview…,” pp. 57-58, “GSW Online Placement…,” pp. 59-62, and “Placement Procedures,” pp. 62-64); and the “Study” section, pp. 64-83, illustrated how the study’s methodology was designed to address the initial principal and supporting research questions (see the sections “Pilot Study and Research Questions,” pp. 65-71 and “Methodology,” pp. 71-82); and presented the Dynamic Criteria Mapping data analysis procedures used in the pilot study and “Chapter Four: Study Findings and Analysis” (see the section “Dynamic Criteria Mapping as Data Analysis,” pp. 82-83). “Appendix A: Pilot Study,” pp. 213-267, discussed how the pilot study inquiry informed the study’s methodology and research questions.

“Chapter Four: Study Findings and Analysis” implemented the principal claim in the study and presented a focused constructivist content validity argument to strengthen the Placement Program’s evaluative procedures: This chapter provided an overview of the study (see the sections “Research Participants,” p. 85, “Data Collection Procedures,” pp. 86-87,
“Focused Data Sets and Research Questions,” pp. 87-94, “Data Analysis Procedures,” pp. 94-114, and “Findings,” pp. 114-134) and the consequent constructivist content validity argument--four validation-argument questions for the Placement Program to consider to strengthen the relationship between the Placement Program’s CWA practices and the writing program’s curriculum (see the section “Discussion,” pp. 134-149). “Appendix B: Study’s Data and Results,” pp. 268-654, provided the study’s data: criteria glossaries, in vivo examples from the transcripts, and frequency codebooks. Finally, this chapter provided the theoretical and pedagogical applications of the dissertation study’s validated claim.

Study Limitations and Broad’s Streamlined DCM Application

This section discusses the constraints in adapting this dissertation study research, and it describes Broad’s (2003, pp. 130-134) streamlined DCM approach. This dissertation presented a study with two primary limitations for writing program administrators interested in using DCM to study and improve placement procedures at their institutions: Replicating this study would be both time-consuming and expensive--likely prohibitively so. Planning, piloting, and conducting the study, collecting the data, and analyzing the findings required intensive work over a two-year period and a variety of resources including specialized software and equipment. Broad (2003) explained that given limited “educational resources” (p. 120) and the “months” and “more months” he needed to conduct his study (p. 124), he did not suppose that instructors and writing program administrators would be able to replicate his methods with precision. Therefore, he proposed a “streamlined form” of DCM that would “yield results more limited in detail and scope but still extremely informative and useful to administrators, instructors, and students” (p. 124). The rest of this section describes Broad’s streamlined DCM approach to data collection and analysis which will be adapted in the following section to provide some general strategies
for writing program administrators implementing my study to investigate the evaluative values or
criteria of their placement practices and improve the constructivist content validity of those
practices.

Broad’s (2003) streamlined DCM approach involves seven steps: “Selecting Sample
Texts” (pp. 128-129), “Articulation in Large Groups” (pp. 129-130), “Collecting Data for
Dynamic Criteria Mapping” (pp. 130-131), “Analyzing Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping”
(pp. 131-132), “Debating and Negotiating Evaluative Differences” (pp. 133-134), “Publicizing,
Learning, and Teaching from the Dynamic Criteria Map,” (pp. 134-135) and “Revising the
DCM” (pp. 134-135). In “Selecting Sample Texts,” educators select sample student essays that
contain both strengths and weaknesses and that demonstrate the principal criteria the writing
program values: They should “feature as many kinds of rhetorical successes and failures as
possible” and “criteria that are particularly important to their writing program” which “exhibit
(or fail to exhibit) those qualities” (p. 128).

After educators read and make notes on “what they value and do not value in each
[sample student] text,” they gather for “Articulation in Large Groups.” During this gathering,
educators discuss and reflect on all of the rhetorical values or criteria they used in judging the
essays. Educators “discuss the specific criteria by which they were guided in reaching their
pass/fail decisions about each text” and “focus on listening to and understanding the full range of
values at work in the program” (pp. 130-131). Recognizing and understanding evaluative
criteria, rather than agreeing upon their importance, is the primary goal of this meeting. While
educators articulate their rhetorical values, two scribes stand at the front of the room to facilitate
the session and record the educators’ values or criteria. With respect to “Collecting Data for
Dynamic Criteria Mapping,” two educators “act as scribes.” Using “marker boards, chalkboards,
flip charts, or computers projected onto a screen,” the scribes transcribe the criteria educators invoke when they discuss the essays, and they record which lines in the sample essays participants discuss in referring to various criteria (p. 131).

During the workshop Dynamic Criteria Mapping in Action: Growing Evaluative Community Locally and Organically at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, Broad (2007) conducted a streamlined 45-minute DCM demonstration, which illustrated the “Articulation” and “Collecting Data” stages. Broad gave approximately 20 workshop participants three sample student essays and instructed them to note the essays’ strengths and weaknesses. In order to collect the data, Joel Haefner, one of the presenters, acted as the scribe and wrote down the criteria educators discussed on a transparency, which was projected onto a large screen. Broad acted as a facilitator, and he asked participants what they valued in the texts. (Participants raised their hands, and Broad asked participants, one-by-one, to note strengths and/or weaknesses with respect to criteria exhibited in particular essays.) To produce an accurate list of rhetorical values or criteria, he often repeated participants’ criteria for clarification, asked participants to further explain their criteria, asked participants questions about their criteria, and/or asked participants to find the specific passages in the sample essays to which they referred.

Broad (2003) argued that “scribes must carefully avoid synthesizing, organizing, or conceptualizing how various criteria are interrelated” during the articulation session (p. 131); for instance, Broad (2007) did not have workshop participants map the criteria they invoked. However, after some time has elapsed, Broad (2003) explained that educators should gather for the “Analyzing Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping” phase. During this stage, educators classify, construe, and construct results from the collected data; more specifically, they “try to
establish the identities, contents, boundaries, and interrelationships of the various criteria on which their evaluative decisions were made” in the Dynamic Criteria Map(s) (p. 132).

During the “Debating and Negotiating Evaluative Differences” stage, which follows the data analysis phase, educators study their Dynamic Criteria Map(s) to discuss the writing program’s assessment dynamics in order to make appropriate evaluative changes collaboratively: “Now that they know, perhaps for the first time, how they do value students’ writing, they need to undertake high-powered professional discussions regarding how they should value that writing” (Broad, 2003, p. 133). Regarding the “Publicizing, Learning, and Teaching from the Dynamic Criteria Map” stage, educators publish their DCM findings to elicit public debate, for DCM “should provide fodder for energetic dialogue regarding teaching and assessing composition” (p. 134). Finally, with respect to “Revising the DCM,” Broad (2003) argued that educators should conduct ongoing DCM studies, whether on a large or small scale, to reflect changing evaluative dynamics accurately: “The point is to keep the process going so that the DCM reflects the program’s rhetorical values steadily more faithfully and so that the DCM keeps up with the inevitable--and desirable--changes in the program’s framework of values” (pp. 134-135).

DCM Heuristic for Placement Assessment Practices

Based upon Broad’s streamlined DCM application, this section presents busy writing program administrators with a general heuristic for understanding and strengthening the connection between their placement assessment practices and their writing program’s curriculum. However, there are caveats that administrators must consider before employing any of these strategies. First, this study’s Dynamic Criteria Maps are specific to the 2006 GSW placement evaluators’ rhetorical values. Broad (2003) explained that while Dynamic Criteria
Mapping “is wholly and usefully portable among writing programs,” the maps are “tailored with care from a specific set of conversations about a specific set of texts”; therefore, “to import a DCM from one program to another would be a tremendous theoretical and pedagogical blunder” (p. 124). In other words, while the Dynamic Criteria Mapping process is transferable among institutions, a particular Dynamic Criteria Map represents educators’ local evaluative deliberations based upon the assessment of local texts; as a result, the Dynamic Criteria Maps in this study cannot be used to study or understand placement readers’ evaluative criteria in any other placement context.

Second, because this dissertation studied the CWA practices of placement evaluators, this heuristic can only be applied in placement programs that esteem and implement rhetorical evaluative practices. This heuristic is only useful for placement programs that use rhetorical placement assessment practices and/or models as discussed by distinguished composition scholars in the field of writing assessment, such as Smith (1993); Calpas and Smith (1995); Haswell (1998, 2001a, 2001b); Harrington (1998, 2005b); Huot (2002); O’Neill (2003); Lynne (2004); Royer and Gilles (2002); and White (2005a). (Refer to “Chapter Two,” “Review of Research,” pp. 10-50, for a discussion of the most current theory and pedagogy in exit and placement assessment.) Whether the placement program employs one, two, or multiple readers to evaluate essays, some form of rhetorical, evaluative deliberation must occur during the placement assessment process. Consequently, writing program administrators who utilize or rely heavily on objectivist assessment practices (such as commercial, computerized software programs or national, standardized assessment exams) to place essays will not find this heuristic useful or applicable.
The heuristic is presented in ten sections, each of which highlights an evaluative issue that writing program administrators can consider for discussion and/or deliberation—an evaluative issue that can strengthen the relationship between a placement program’s CWA practices and a writing program’s curriculum. More specifically, each part of the heuristic is posed to move administrators’ thinking from what Broad (2003) calls the “descriptive” process, or “how they [evaluators] do value students’ writing,” to the “normative” process, or “how they [evaluators] should value that writing” (p. 133).

This heuristic guides administrators in reflecting on what placement evaluators really value (a descriptive process) before considering what placement evaluators should value (a normative process). Therefore, these two key matters—the descriptive and the normative—are discussed following each section. First, writing program administrators are presented with findings or observations from this study. Second, writing program administrators are provided with an efficient DCM activity, adapted from Broad’s (2003) streamlined DCM approach, for working towards normative, evaluative placement practices which emphasize curricular values or criteria.

For the sake of efficiency and organization, the sections of the heuristic focus on the first five stages of Broad’s approach—“Selecting Sample Texts” (pp. 128-129), “Articulation in Large Groups” (pp. 129-130), “Collecting Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping” (pp. 130-131), “Analyzing Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping” (pp. 131-132), and “Debating and Negotiating Evaluative Differences” (pp. 133-134)—and these stages are referenced in parenthetical citations to indicate the stages this heuristic adapted/modified from Broad’s (2003) streamlined DCM approach. Because these stages are similar with respect to each question, some repetition was unavoidable. However, these stages have been customized to address the evaluative issue
foregrounded in each specific section of the heuristic. Because each section of the heuristic focuses on one central, placement assessment issue, it is recommended, in general, that writing program administrators focus on each issue and its corresponding activity as a separate streamlined DCM procedure.

**Issue 1**: How do placement evaluators weigh evaluative criteria, and how should they weigh them to strengthen the constructivist content validity of the placement program?

This study identified and studied each pair’s ten most frequently used criteria in each placement category: English 110, English 111, and English 112. In Chapter Four, the Dynamic Criteria Maps and codebooks revealed that particular criteria were given more weight in placement discussions overall. (Refer to the Dynamic Criteria Maps and codebooks on the following pages: “Figure 1: English 110 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 105; “Figure 2: English 111 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 106; “Figure 3: English 112 Dynamic Criteria Map,” p. 107, and “Table 1: Quantitative Codebooks of Frequently Used Criteria,” p. 108.) For example, Pair 1, Pair 2, Pair 3, and Pair 4 invoked the curricular criterion “Sentence Structure” with the most frequency in English 110 placement decisions; all four pairs used this curricular criterion as the first or second most frequently invoked criterion in English 111 placement decisions; and all four pairs used this curricular criterion as one of the ten most frequently invoked criterion in English 112 placement decisions. In addition, the curricular criterion “Organization/Theme/Structure” was included in the ten most frequently invoked criteria list for each pair in each placement category. At the other end of the evaluative spectrum, numerous criteria were invoked much less frequently; many criteria, such as “Style,” “Pronoun Shifts,” or “Choppiness of Writing,” were invoked with a frequency of less than five percent and sometimes less than half of one percent in placement decisions in all categories.
Because placement evaluators will weigh criteria differently, writing program administrators can adapt Broad’s (2003) streamlined DCM approach to reveal what criteria evaluators value and how frequently they employ these values. Whether administrators would like to identify frequently and/or less frequently used criteria in individual placement categories or in all placement categories, administrators should select essays that both highlight strengths and weaknesses and emphasize principal curricular criteria. (For Broad’s approach, see “Selecting Sample Texts,” Broad, 2003, pp. 128-129.) Administrators can then distribute the essays to the placement evaluators and instruct them to place the essays into placement categories while noting why they made these placement decisions and while annotating the essays’ strengths and weaknesses. The scribes should then record the criteria evaluators discuss and be aware of the number of times particular criteria are discussed. (For Broad’s approaches, see “Articulation in Large Groups,” Broad, 2003, pp. 129-130, and “Collecting Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping,” Broad, 2003, pp. 130-131.)

After administrators review the criteria and recognize criteria that were frequently invoked, infrequently invoked, and/or not invoked during the articulation sessions, they can return to the group and facilitate an analysis of the frequent and infrequent use of particular criteria. In a criteria mapping session, administrators and evaluators can collaboratively identify which criteria are used frequently and infrequently while mapping connections among criteria. (For Broad’s approach, see “Analyzing Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping,” Broad, 2003, pp. 131-132.) After analyzing the criteria placement evaluators have been frequently and/or infrequently using in recent placement decisions, administrators and evaluators can discuss the criteria they should be using frequently and/or less frequently to place essays with respect to curricular criteria and values.
Administrators can ask evaluators questions to focus on how the frequent, infrequent, or nonexistent use of particular criteria strengthens or weakens the placement program’s constructivist content validity. Possible discussion questions may include the following:

- Why is the criterion [insert criterion] used frequently?
- How is the criterion [insert criterion] related to the curricular criterion [insert curricular criterion]?
- Why is the criterion [insert criterion] used more frequently than the criterion [insert criterion]? What does the frequent (or infrequent) use of the criterion [insert criterion] compare to the curricular skill [insert curricular skill] taught in class and emphasized in the writing program’s learning outcomes? (For Broad’s approach, see “Debating and Negotiating Evaluative Differences,” Broad, 2003, pp. 133-134.)

**Issue 2**: How do placement evaluators use contextual criteria in evaluation generally, and how should they employ them to strengthen the constructivist content validity of the placement program?

Regarding Supporting Research Question 3, this study found that contextual criteria played an important role in placement readers’ evaluative decisions. (Refer to Chapter Four’s “Findings,” pp. 114-134, and “Discussion,” pp. 134-149, for a thorough discussion of how placement evaluators used contextual criteria and how placement training could be modified to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate contextual criteria.) Broad (2003) explained that contextual criteria entail evaluative “issues not directly related to the text being judged” (p. 34), and emphasize how “pedagogical, ethical, collegial, and other aspects of the environment surrounding students’ texts guided and shaped evaluators’ decisions” (p. 73).
The majority of criteria within the Dynamic Criteria Maps have both textual and contextual properties. According to “Figure 1: English 110 Dynamic Criteria Map” (p. 105), thirty-two out of the forty criteria evaluators used had both textual and contextual properties; according to “Figure 2: English 111 Dynamic Criteria Map” (p. 106), thirty-three out of the forty criteria evaluators used had both textual and contextual properties; and according to “Figure 3: English 112 Dynamic Criteria Map” (p. 107), thirty-four out of the forty criteria evaluators used had both textual and contextual properties. Some criteria were solely contextual. Five criteria in “Figure 1: English 110 Dynamic Criteria Map” (p. 105) were exclusively contextual; two criteria in “Figure 2: English 111 Dynamic Criteria Map” (p. 106) were exclusively contextual; and four criteria in the “Figure 3: English 112 Dynamic Criteria Map” (p. 107) were exclusively contextual.

Broad’s (2003) streamlined DCM approach can be adapted to reveal both the textual and contextual meanings of evaluative criteria. After selecting sample placement essays that highlight strengths and weaknesses and emphasize principal curricular criteria, administrators can distribute the essays to the placement evaluators and instruct them to place the essays into placement categories while noting why they made these placement decisions and while annotating the essays’ strengths and weaknesses. (For Broad’s approach, see “Selecting Sample Texts,” Broad, 2003, pp. 128-129.) The administrators should not instruct evaluators to distinguish between textual or contextual meanings of criteria; the textual/contextual evaluative issue should be addressed during the data analysis stage. The scribes should then record the criteria evaluators discuss and be aware of textual and contextual criteria. (For Broad’s approaches, see “Articulation in Large Groups,” Broad, 2003, pp. 129-130, and “Collecting Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping,” Broad, 2003, pp. 130-131.)
Administrators should review the criteria and identify criteria that may have textual and contextual meanings or entirely textual meanings; then they can meet with the evaluators to discuss the textual and contextual properties of the criteria discussed. Administrators and evaluators can collaboratively identify textual and/or contextual meanings while mapping connections among criteria with respect to curricular values or criteria. (For Broad’s approach, see “Analyzing Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping,” Broad, 2003, pp. 131-132.) Finally, administrators can ask evaluators questions to move collaboratively toward using contextual criteria that strengthen the placement program’s constructivist content validity. Possible discussion questions may include the following:

- Why does [insert criterion] have both textual and contextual meanings? How are these meanings similar and/or different?
- How is the criterion [insert criterion] connected (or not connected) to the curriculum?
- Is the exclusively contextual criterion [insert criterion] appropriate or inappropriate when considering the curricular criterion [insert curricular criterion]? (For Broad’s approach, see “Debating and Negotiating Evaluative Differences,” Broad, 2003, pp. 133-134.)

**Issue 3**: To what extent do principal placement assessment criteria reflect exit assessment criteria and skill-oriented criteria taught in class, and how should placement criteria be aligned with exit- and skill-oriented criteria to strengthen the constructivist content validity of the placement program?

Prominent assessment scholars have long emphasized the importance of the connection between curriculum and teaching. Broad (2003) argued that DCM “strengthens the bond between how writing is taught and assessed” (p. 122), White (1989, 1994, 1995, 2005a) has insisted that placement practices be derived from the context of the curriculum; and Calpas and
Smith (1995) explained that “placement reading is a very real continuation of the pedagogical and curricular work composition teachers do in the composition classroom” (p. 6). An analysis of GSW’s documents and placement training practices revealed that the criteria used in placement and exit assessment and the criteria used to teach writing skills in courses are aligned in the writing program, although these criteria are applied according to their particular contexts.

Placement criteria represent entrance-level criteria, criteria used to ascertain writing skills at the beginning of a writing course; rubric criteria represent exit-level criteria, criteria used to judge writing at the end of a writing course; and skill-oriented criteria represent criteria taught between the placement and exit assessments, criteria taught to help students meet the exit assessment criteria or standards. However, six principal criteria establish the core evaluative, curricular criteria for the writing program. (Refer to Chapter Four’s “Data Analysis Procedures,” pp. 94-114, for details on the principal and secondary curricular values of the writing program.) This alignment is evident in the program’s documentation, including the Placement Evaluators’ Handbook (2006-07), Instructors’ Handbook (2006-07), and the General Studies Writing Program Rubric (2007) (see “Appendix K: General Studies Writing Program Rubric,” p. 709). However, because writing programs may not have program documents or practices which articulate such a curricular alignment, DCM can be used to reveal and strengthen curricular connections, and ultimately, lead to documents that reinforce the bond between evaluative criteria and the writing curriculum.

Whether a writing program clearly articulates this criteria/curriculum connection, Broad’s (2003) streamlined DCM approach can be adapted to uncover these connections in order to begin documenting them. Writing program administrators should select sample placement essays that highlight strengths and weaknesses and emphasize principal curricular criteria. (For Broad’s
Administrators should review the criteria and identify criteria that elicit placement, exit, and writing skills-oriented pedagogical criteria. They can then meet with the evaluators to discuss how their placement criteria are connected to and differ from exit and writing skills-oriented criteria. Through criteria mapping, administrators and evaluators can make connections between placement criteria and the writing skills taught in class. (For Broad’s approach, see “Analyzing Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping,” Broad, 2003, pp. 131-132.) Finally, administrators can ask evaluators questions to move collaboratively toward using criteria that strengthen the placement program’s constructivist content validity. Possible discussion questions may include the following:

- How does the entrance-level criterion [insert entrance-level criterion] reflect what is being taught in the writing class [insert writing class]?
- How is the entrance-level criterion [insert entrance-level criterion] similar to and/or different from the exit-level criterion [insert exit-level criterion]?
• How does the entrance-level criterion [insert entrance-level criterion] differ from (or compare to) the exit-level criterion [insert exit-level criterion] in assessments? (For Broad’s approach, see “Debating and Negotiating Evaluative Differences,” Broad, 2003, pp. 133-134.)

Issue 4: How do placement evaluators use criteria concurrently, and how should evaluators simultaneously use evaluative criteria to strengthen the constructivist content validity of the placement program?

During the first day of placement training, Gina (personal communication, June 7, 2006) explained that evaluators must consider “multiple indicators of quality” simultaneously in placing essays. Even though the Dynamic Criteria Maps and codebooks identified the ten most frequently cited criteria for each placement category, numerous criteria were identified and isolated. Pair 1, Pair 2, Pair 3, and Pair 4 used thirty-eight criteria, fifty-two criteria, forty-four criteria, and forty-eight criteria respectively in English 110 placement decisions; Pair 1, Pair 2, Pair 3, and Pair 4 used fifty-eight criteria, forty-six criteria, sixty-six criteria, and fifty-two criteria respectively in English 111 placement decisions; Pair 1, Pair 2, Pair 3, and Pair 4 used twenty-nine criteria, thirty-six criteria, forty-one criteria, and thirty-three criteria respectively in English 112 placement decisions. (Refer to Chapter Four’s “Findings,” pp. 114-134, for the study’s results.) Furthermore, the data analysis revealed that evaluators used many criteria at the same time. QSR NVivo and Microsoft Excel uncovered multiple criteria within single lines of transcripts. (Refer to Chapter Four’s “Data Analysis Procedures,” pp. 94-114, for a description of how criteria were identified and isolated.)

In fact, the convergence of multiple indicators of quality created individual criteria categories. In each Dynamic Criteria Map, criteria such as “Clarity/Readability,” “Paragraphs,”
and “Introduction/Conclusion” were coded [M] because they referred to multiple principal curricular criteria as well as other evaluative factors. For instance, Pair 1 used the criterion “Clarity/Readability” in English 110 placement decisions to refer to essays that they had difficulty reading due to a variety of elements, such as “unclear main ideas, theses, organization, sentences, references, words, and/or repetition.”

Broad’s (2003) streamlined DCM approach can be used to identify multiple criteria, how these criteria intersect, and how such interconnections contribute to or detract from a placement program’s constructivist content validity. Writing program administrators should select sample placement essays that highlight strengths and weaknesses and emphasize principal curricular criteria. (For Broad’s approach, see “Selecting Sample Texts,” Broad, 2003, pp. 128-129.) Administrators can then distribute the essays to the placement evaluators and instruct them to place the essays into placement categories while noting why they made these placement decisions and while annotating the essays’ strengths and weaknesses. Administrators should not direct evaluators to note intersections or connections among criteria and curricular values; such connections should be addressed during the data analysis stage. The scribes should then record the criteria which evaluators discuss and be aware of relationships among criteria. (For Broad’s approaches, see “Articulation in Large Groups,” Broad, 2003, pp. 129-130, and “Collecting Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping,” Broad, 2003, pp. 130-131.)

Administrators should review the criteria and identify criteria that seem connected and that might be used concurrently. Administrators can then meet with evaluators to discuss how criteria are interconnected and used simultaneously, and using criteria mapping, administrators and evaluators can visually connect criteria and discuss whether these criteria are connected to curricular values. (For Broad’s approach, see “Analyzing Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping,”
Finally, administrators can ask evaluators questions to move collaboratively toward the simultaneous use of criteria that strengthens the placement program’s constructivist content validity. Possible questions may include the following:

- How does the concurrent use of the criteria [insert criteria] reflect curricular values or the skills taught in the writing class [insert writing class]?
- Why are the criteria [insert criteria] used simultaneously, and to what curricular values or criteria are they related?
- How does the convergence (or divergence) of the criteria [insert criteria] deviate from the skills-oriented [insert skills-oriented criteria] criteria taught in class? (For Broad’s approach, see “Debating and Negotiating Evaluative Differences,” Broad, 2003, pp. 133-134.)

Issue 5: How do placement readers use criteria that express evaluative indecisiveness or uncertainty, and how should evaluators be more decisive in their placement decisions to strengthen the constructivist content validity of the placement program?

This study revealed that placement readers used contextual criteria that expressed evaluative indecisiveness or uncertainty in making placement decisions. Pair 3 frequently invoked such a contextual criterion in all three placement categories—English 110, English 111, and English 112—and is represented in all three maps and the codebooks. Pair 3 used the criterion “Talked Up/Talked Into/Can Go/Could Go/Can Live With (9%)” in English 110 placement decisions, the criterion “Can Live With/Could Live With/Can Go/Could Go/Talked Down/Talked Into/Talked Up (5%)” in English 111 placement decisions, and the criterion “Can Go/Could Go/Talked Up/Talked Down/Bump It Up (6%)” in English 112 placement decisions. With respect to this criterion, Pair 4 used it to express reluctance in their placement decisions, a
desire to be persuaded into making other placement decisions, and/or a resignation to placement decisions.

Concerning English 112 placement decisions, Pair 4 also frequently used the criterion “Can/Could Do/Go (4%)” for English 112 placements, which similarly referred to “a willingness and/or desire to go up or down on particular placement decisions”; and Pair 2 used the criterion “Could Be Talked Into/Talk with You (2%),” which referred to their “willingness to be persuaded into placing writers into English 111.” Placement readers also expressed uncertainty by questioning their own evaluative abilities and attitudes. Pair 1 used the criterion “I Must Have Been Off/Questioning My Placement/Zoning Out (1%)” in which the evaluators questioned their own placement decisions due to their perceived lack of focus. In English 111 and English 112 placement decisions, Pair 2 used the criterion “Mean/Generous/Nice (0.5%)” in English 111 placement decisions; evaluators commented that they worried that they were being mean, nice, or overgenerous in particular placement decisions. Likewise, in English 111 placement decisions, Pair 3 used the criterion “Too Harsh/Too Strict/Too Lax/Too Much Credit (1%),” in which they indicated that they may have been too harsh, too strict, too lax, or gave too much credit in making particular placement decisions.

All of these criteria emphasized an assessment dynamic which expressed an uncertainty and/or complacency in making placement decisions. At the heart of these criteria is a dynamic that emphasizes evaluative uncertainty—a dynamic that does not make explicit the connection between evaluative practices and the curriculum. Furthermore, the more uncertainty evaluators express during placement decisions, the more likely the decisions are arbitrary.

Broad’s (2003) streamlined DCM approach can be used to reveal criteria that express uncertainty and indecisiveness, how these criteria function, and how these criteria detract from
the placement program’s constructivist content validity. However, writing program
administrators will have more difficulty revealing these criteria because they express general
evaluative dynamics which occur during high-stakes acts of assessment--assessment acts that call
on evaluators to make decisions with significant impact on students. In addition, the criteria of
uncertainty and indecisiveness are more subtle and are often qualified with modals, such as the
words “could” and “can.” As a result, Broad’s DCM streamlined approach should attempt to
reproduce actual evaluative practices.

After administrators select sample placement essays that highlight strengths and
weaknesses and emphasize principal curricular criteria, they can then distribute the essays to the
placement evaluators and instruct them to place the essays into placement categories
collaboratively or individually. (For Broad’s approach, see “Selecting Sample Texts,” Broad,
2003, pp. 128-129.) They can then instruct readers to evaluate the essays according to typical
placement procedures, whether using the two-reader evaluation approach or Haswell’s (2001b)
“two-tier method,” which primarily employs single readers and readings (p. 42). (Refer to
Chapter Two’s “Applicability of Exit Assessment Theory to Placement Assessment Theory,” pp.
22-32, for a discussion of rhetorical placement practices.) Administrators and evaluators can
then gather to discuss placement decisions; administrators should ask individuals and/or pairs to
discuss not only their placement decisions but their process of making these placement decisions.
The scribes should then record the criteria used by evaluators and be aware of any criteria that
express uncertainty or ambiguity. (For Broad’s approaches, see “Articulation in Large Groups,”
Broad, 2003, pp. 129-130, and “Collecting Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping,” Broad, 2003,
pp. 130-131).
Administrators should review and identify those criteria that appear to express evaluative dynamics of uncertainty or indecisiveness. Administrators can then meet with evaluators to discuss to what extent these criteria are connected to curricular values, if at all. (For Broad’s approach, see “Analyzing Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping,” Broad, 2003, pp. 131-132). Administrators can ask evaluators questions to address the ambiguity of criteria that express uncertainty and to move toward criteria that express certainty with respect to curricular values, which would strengthen the placement program’s constructivist content validity. Possible questions may include the following:

- What exactly does the placement criterion [insert placement criterion] express?
- When comparing the placement criterion [insert placement criterion] with the placement criterion [insert placement criterion], which criterion is more clearly connected to the writing skill [insert writing skill] taught in the writing class [insert writing class]?
- How does the criterion [insert placement criterion] express uncertainty in placement discussions and/or decisions, and does this criterion detract from making sound placement decisions connected to the curriculum? (For Broad’s approach, see “Debating and Negotiating Evaluative Differences,” Broad, 2003, pp. 133-134.)

Issue 6: How do placement evaluators use criteria that express general intuitions, and how should evaluators more clearly articulate these intuitive responses concerning essays to strengthen the constructivist content validity of the placement program?

According to this study, placement readers used contextual criteria that expressed general intuitions—immediate, unelaborated insights or perceptions—in making placement decisions. For example, evaluators sometimes generally expressed that essays or essay elements were unusual. In English 110 placement decisions, Pair 4 used the criterion “Weird/Odd/Strange (8%),” which
referred to “paragraphs, spelling, theses, introductions, conclusions, punctuation, source use, and/or sentence constructions [that] are weird, odd, and/or strange”; and they used the criterion “Crazy (2%),” which referred to “entire essays, capital letters, colon usage, paragraphs, run ons, sentence structure, examples, and/or length [that] are crazy.” Regarding English 112 placement decisions, Pair 3 used the criterion “Weird/Strange/Odd (3.5%),” which referred to “essays, paragraphs, and/or comma usage [that] are weird, strange, or odd.” In English 110 and English 111 placement decisions, Pair 3 used the criteria “Weird (2.5%),” “Weird/Quirky/Strange/Odd (3%),” “Weird/Quirky/Strange/Odd (3%),” and “Screwy (0.5%)” respectively. For both placement categories, this pair noted unusual essay elements including sentence constructions and spellings.

Evaluators also generally expressed that they enjoyed or liked placement essays or essay elements. In English 112 placement decisions, Pair 4 used the criterion “Entertaining/Fun/Interesting/Liked (5%),” which referred to how the pair “liked essays and found them to be entertaining, interesting, fun to read, and/or enjoyable.” In English 112 placement decisions, Pair 1 used the criterion “Liked/Interested/Engaged (1%),” which referred to how the pair was “interested in, engaged with, and liked the placement essays.” In English 110, English 111, and English 112 placement decisions, Pair 4 used the criteria “Cool (0.5%),” “Cool (1%),” and “Cool (1%)” respectively. These criteria described good or likeable placement essays or essay elements.

Overall, evaluators used these criteria to provide quick impressions of how essays or essay elements were strange or likeable. Because these criteria were intuitive, spontaneous responses, they were not specific or particularly descriptive. In fact, evaluators likely invoked these criteria because they were drawing upon past experiences reading and evaluating essays.
In other words, placement readers likely found essays strange or likeable in relation to latent, subconscious memories of the hundreds if not thousands of essays they had evaluated previously.

Broad’s (2003) streamlined DCM approach can be used to identify and clarify criteria that express intuitive responses. Broad (personal communication, October 6, 2006) explained that DCM revealed “latent rhetorical values” using a “psychoanalytical approach.” In particular, administrators should identify what evaluators like and dislike in placement essays. Writing program administrators should select sample placement essays that highlight strengths and weaknesses and emphasize principal curricular criteria. (For Broad’s approach, see “Selecting Sample Texts,” Broad, 2003, pp. 128-129). Administrators can then distribute the essays to the placement evaluators and instruct them to place the essays into placement categories while noting why they made these placement decisions and while annotating the essays’ strengths and weaknesses. Administrators should not instruct evaluators to consider what they like, dislike, or find peculiar in placement essays; this issue should be addressed during the data analysis stage. The scribes should then record the evaluators’ criteria and be aware of intuitive evaluative responses. (For Broad’s approaches, see “Articulation in Large Groups,” Broad, 2003, pp. 129-130, and “Collecting Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping,” Broad, 2003, pp. 130-131).

Administrators should review the criteria and identify those criteria that seem to invoke intuitive evaluative responses, such as those already discussed. Then administrators and evaluators can gather to discuss, define, and visually connect criteria to determine whether these criteria are connected to curricular values. (For Broad’s approach, see “Analyzing Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping,” Broad, 2003, pp. 131-132.) Broad (personal communication, October 6, 2006) explained that educators can collaboratively use the maps “to illuminate what is subconscious.” Ultimately, through criteria mapping, administrators and evaluators can
construct connections between these intuitive placement criteria and curricular criteria. (For Broad’s approach, see “Analyzing Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping,” Broad, 2003, pp. 131-132.) Administrators can ask evaluators questions to move collaboratively toward the use of intuitive criteria which strengthens the placement program’s constructivist content validity. Possible questions may include the following:

- When you said that you [like or dislike] this essay, what exactly do you mean?
- What exactly do you like and/or dislike about this essay?
- If an essay is [insert intuitive response] what exactly does that mean, and how is it connected to placement, teaching, and/or the curriculum?
- When you said that the sentences were [insert intuitive response], what did you mean, and how is that related to the placement criterion [insert placement criterion]? (For Broad’s approach, see “Debating and Negotiating Evaluative Differences,” Broad, 2003, pp. 133-134.)

**Issue 7:** How do placement evaluators use contextual criteria to construct writers and teachers, and how should evaluators employ these criteria to strengthen the constructivist content validity of the placement program?

This study demonstrates that placement evaluators used Broad’s (2003) “constructing writers” contextual criterion, which referred to the “imagined details” or “the fictional portrayals of student authors’ lives” (p. 89) in making placement decisions. In Broad’s study, portfolio evaluators “inferred, imagined, or simply assumed ‘facts’ about a student-author and her composition processes” (pp. 89-90). This study found that evaluators made contextual decisions based upon the “constructing writers’” contextual criteria; evaluators imagined student writers’ skills, needs, abilities, and/or attitudes. In addition, placement evaluators also inferred,
imagined, and/or assumed other instructors’ ability to teach students in the program’s writing courses. For example, placement evaluators used criteria such as “Extra Attention/Extra Time,” “Writing Ability/Knowledge/Attitude of Students,” and “Ability/Responsiveness of Instructors.” (Refer to Chapter Four’s “Discussion,” pp. 134-149, for an in-depth discussion of these contextual criteria with regard to “Supporting Research Question 3,” pp. 140-144.) Some evaluator pairs discussed how writers’ essays indicated a skill level that may cause them to have trouble, to struggle, or to succeed in writing classes, and they discussed whether instructors possessed the ability to help writers with various difficulties, such as sentence-level errors, readability, proofreading, and grammar, with respect to their pedagogical training. Also, they speculated about writers’ work ethics--a factor that was not explicitly linked to the curriculum.

Broad’s (2003) streamlined DCM approach can be used to identify contextual criteria that construct writers and teachers and then determine the appropriateness of such criteria, for appropriate contextual criteria encourage evaluative practices based upon curricular values. Writing program administrators should select sample placement essays that highlight strengths and weaknesses and emphasize principal curricular criteria. (For Broad’s approach, see “Selecting Sample Texts,” Broad, 2003, pp. 128-129.) Administrators can then distribute the essays to the placement evaluators and instruct them to place the essays into placement categories while noting why they made these placement decisions and while annotating the essays’ strengths and weaknesses. Administrators should not instruct evaluators to make note of imagined details about writers or instructors with regard to the essays; this issue should be addressed during the data analysis stage. The scribes should then record criteria discussed by the evaluators, and they should be aware of these contextual factors. (For Broad’s approaches, see
Administrators should review the criteria and identify those criteria that construct writers or teachers. Then administrators and evaluators can gather to discuss, define, and visually connect criteria to determine whether imagining details about writers or teachers are connected to curricular values. Through criteria mapping, administrators and evaluators can make connections between these contextual criteria and curricular values. (For Broad’s approach, see “Analyzing Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping,” Broad, 2003, pp. 131-132.) Administrators can ask evaluators questions to move collaboratively toward the appropriate use of contextual criteria—criteria that invoke imagined representations of writers and instructors that strengthen the placement program’s constructivist content validity. Possible questions may include the following:

- When you speculated that the writer [insert relevant information], what did you mean?
- Why did you speculate that the writer [insert relevant information], and how is this connected to his/her success in the writing class [insert writing class]?
- How is the writer’s perceived ability to [insert relevant information] connected to what the writer will learn in the writing class [insert writing class]? (For Broad’s approach, see “Debating and Negotiating Evaluative Differences,” Broad, 2003, pp. 133-134.)

**Issue 8:** How do placement readers’ evaluative practices or dynamics differ among individuals, pairs, or trios, and how should these evaluative dynamics become congruent to strengthen the constructivist content validity of the placement program?

This study identified connections among pairs’ evaluative criteria in the Dynamic Criteria Maps; however, the ten most frequently used criteria for each pair in each map and codebook
differed. In addition to weighing criteria differently, placement evaluators also used different criteria. Even when placement evaluators used similar criteria, they used them in slightly different ways. Overall, placement readers’ use of criteria and overall evaluative dynamics were both similar and diverse. Because placement evaluators’ use of criteria will likely differ in any institutional context, many programs, such as the GSW program, have used training and norming sessions to facilitate reliable placement reading practices. Historically, training and calibration sessions tend to privilege agreement over disagreement; however, disagreement should be valued and should precede agreement in any DCM evaluative discussion.

Broad’s (2003) streamlined DCM approach can be used to identify evaluative differences before moving to evaluative agreement based upon curricular values. Writing program administrators should select sample placement essays that highlight strengths and weaknesses and emphasize principal curricular criteria. (For Broad’s approach, see “Selecting Sample Texts,” Broad, 2003, pp. 128-129.) Administrators can then distribute the essays to the placement evaluators and instruct them to place the essays into placement categories while noting why they made these placement decisions and while annotating the essays’ strengths and weaknesses. The scribes should then record the criteria which evaluators discuss, and they should be aware of dissimilarities among evaluators’ criteria. (For Broad’s approach, see “Articulation in Large Groups,” Broad, 2003, pp. 129-130, and “Collecting Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping,” Broad, 2003, pp. 130-131.)

Administrators should review the criteria and identify those criteria which caused disagreement and agreement. Then administrators and evaluators can gather to discuss, define, and visually connect criteria to determine whether these criteria are connected to curricular values. Through criteria mapping, administrators and evaluators can make connections between
similar and/or dissimilar criteria and curricular criteria. Administrators and evaluators should consider using criteria that are most closely aligned with curricular and pedagogical values. (For Broad’s approach, see “Analyzing Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping,” Broad, 2003, pp. 131-132.) Administrators can ask evaluators questions to move collaboratively toward criteria that invoke curricular values and that strengthen the placement program’s constructivist content validity. Possible questions may include the following:

- How is the criterion [insert criterion] related to the writing skill [insert writing skill] taught in the writing class [insert writing class]?

- Why did the evaluator pair (or individual) emphasize the criterion [insert criterion] in this placement decision, but you did not emphasize this same criterion?

- Which criteria do you emphasize the most/least frequently in your placement decisions, and why do you emphasize/deemphasize these criteria in your decisions?

- How does the placement criterion [insert placement criterion] relate to a skill emphasized/described in the program document [insert program document name]? (For Broad’s approach, see “Debating and Negotiating Evaluative Differences,” Broad, 2003, pp. 133-134.)

Issue 9: How do writing program administrators gauge placement readers’ evaluative practices over a period of time, and how should administrators measure these practices to strengthen the constructivist content validity of the placement program?

According to Chapter Four’s Dynamic Criteria Maps (pp. 105-107), placement readers’ use of evaluative criteria shifted from the first half (June 12-June 22, 2006) to the second half (June 26-July 19, 2006) of the Placement Program. Although the significance of this evaluative shift could not be determined, the study presented the following “Validation-Argument Question
2” in Chapter Four: “Since evaluators’ placement criteria fluctuate over time, how can the Placement Coordinator gauge evaluative dynamics to help readers refocus their evaluative practices on curricular values” (p. 138)? (Refer to Chapter Four’s “Discussion” section, “Supporting Research Question 2,” pp. 140-141, for the full discussion.) Administrators should try to gauge placement readers’ evaluative practices over time to strengthen the constructivist content validity of the placement program.

Broad’s (2003) streamlined DCM approach can be used to identify evaluative differences over a period of time and gauge whether these criteria reflect curricular values. Writing program administrators, however, will need to conduct more than one articulation session—preferably several articulation sessions over several weeks. If articulation sessions are already being conducted to focus on other issues, evaluative changes over time could also be noted after these sessions. With regard to sample text selection, writing program administrators should select sample placement essays that highlight strengths and weaknesses and emphasize principal curricular criteria. (For Broad’s approach, see “Selecting Sample Texts,” Broad, 2003, pp. 128-129.) Administrators can then distribute the essays to the placement evaluators and instruct them to place the essays into placement categories while noting why they made these placement decisions and while annotating the essays’ strengths and weaknesses. The scribes should then record the criteria which evaluators use in discussing the sample essays. (For Broad’s approaches, see “Articulation in Large Groups,” Broad, 2003, pp. 129-130, and “Collecting Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping,” Broad, 2003, pp. 130-131.) Administrators should review the criteria over a period of time and identify those criteria which are consistently discussed and those criteria which are less frequently discussed in articulation sessions. Then administrators and evaluators can gather to discuss, define, and
visually connect criteria between or among different sessions (conducted at various points throughout a placement program) to determine which criteria are connected to curricular values. Through criteria mapping, administrators and evaluators can make connections between various criteria from different time periods and curricular values, and they can note if evaluators have moved away from curricular criteria over time. Administrators and evaluators can then consider how to move evaluators toward using criteria that are most closely aligned with curricular and pedagogical values in future placement decisions. (For Broad’s approach, see “Analyzing Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping,” Broad, 2003, pp. 131-132.)

Administrators can then ask evaluators questions to introduce or reintroduce criteria that invoke curricular values which strengthen the placement program’s constructivist content validity. Possible questions may include the following:

- Why was the writing skill [insert the writing skill], a skill taught in the writing class [insert the writing class], emphasized more in time period [insert time period] than in the time period [insert the time period]?  
- To what degree do you still use the criterion [insert criterion] in placing essays into the placement category [insert placement category]?  
- Has the criterion [insert criterion] been used more or less frequently in your placement decisions recently? (For Broad’s approach, see “Debating and Negotiating Evaluative Differences,” Broad, 2003, pp. 133-134.)

**Issue 10**: How do writing program administrators gauge placement readers’ evaluative practices with regard to multilingual or multi-dialectical writing, and how should administrators improve these evaluative practices to strengthen the constructivist content validity of the placement program?
The issue of evaluating essays that exhibited characteristics of multilingual or multidialectical writers was negligible in this study because the *Placement Evaluators’ Handbook (2006-07)*, and the Placement Coordinator instructed evaluators not to evaluate essays that contained significant ESL features. According to the *Placement Evaluators’ Handbook*, “Essays that contain substantial evidence of ESL-related problems should not be placed, but should instead be given to the Assistant to the Placement Coordinator” (p. 12). The Placement Coordinator gave these essays to the university’s English as a Second Language Program for placement into its course sequence.

In spite of directions to the contrary, placement evaluators still noted possible English as a Second Language (ESL) and non-standard features in the process of placing essays. With regard to English 110 placement decisions, Pair 1 used the criterion “ESL (< 0.5%)” and “Non Standard Dialect (0.5%)”; and Pair 3 used the criterion “ESL (< 0.5%).” Pair 1 used the criterion “ESL (< 0.5%)” in English 111 placement decisions, and Pair 3 used the criterion “ESL (< 0.5%)” in English 112 placement decisions. In each instance, the criterion “ESL” referred to multilingual writing or writers. If ESL essays had not been placed by the ESL program, references to ESL features would have likely been more prominent. Because multilingual writers have diverse needs, sensitizing placement evaluators to ESL issues is paramount in most writing programs that enroll large number of multilingual writers in mainstream classes--classes not designated as ESL sections.

Broad’s (2003) streamlined DCM approach can be used to identify and discuss ESL and non-standard writing features in light of curricular values. Writing program administrators should select sample placement essays written by multilingual writers that highlight strengths and weaknesses and that emphasize principal curricular criteria. (For Broad’s approach, see
“Selecting Sample Texts,” Broad, 2003, pp. 128-129.) Administrators can then distribute the essays to the placement evaluators and instruct them to place the essays into placement categories while noting why they made these placement decisions and while annotating the essays’ strengths and weaknesses. Administrators should not instruct evaluators to note ESL-specific features; this issue should be addressed during the data analysis stage. The scribes should then record criteria the evaluators discuss and be aware of the ESL features they articulate. (For Broad’s approaches, see “Articulation in Large Groups,” Broad, 2003, pp. 129-130, and “Collecting Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping,” Broad, 2003, pp. 130-131.)

Administrators should review the criteria and isolate those criteria, such as the criterion “ESL” identified and defined in this study, which are specific to multilingual writing. Then administrators and evaluators can gather to discuss, define, and visually connect these criteria to determine how these criteria connect to curricular values. (For Broad’s approach, see “Analyzing Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping,” Broad, 2003, pp. 131-132.) Through criteria mapping, administrators and evaluators can make connections between ESL criteria and curricular values. Administrators and evaluators should also consider how these criteria are similar or different from criteria used to place essays perceived to be written by native speakers of English, and then discuss how these criteria are aligned with curricular and pedagogical values. (For Broad’s approach, see “Analyzing Data for Dynamic Criteria Mapping,” Broad, 2003, pp. 131-132.)

While noting multilingual students’ needs as writers, administrators can ask evaluators questions to move collaboratively toward criteria that invoke curricular values and that strengthen the placement program’s constructivist content validity. Possible questions may include the following:
• How does the criterion [insert criterion] assist or hinder the placement of multilingual writers into appropriate courses?

• How does the criterion [insert criterion] used to place multilingual writers compare to the curricular criterion [insert curricular criterion]?

• How much of a factor was the use of the criterion [insert criterion] in placing the multilingual essay into the placement category [insert placement category]? (For Broad’s approach, see “Debating and Negotiating Evaluative Differences,” Broad, 2003, pp. 133-134.)

Political Impediments and DCM Implementation Strategies

This section identifies and discusses current obstacles posed by the federal government and corporations to DCM research and then provides guiding questions to help writing program administrators determine their own willingness to implement DCM procedures. Composition and assessment scholars, such as White (2005a), have argued recently that political and corporate forces are actively appropriating and homogenizing placement and proficiency assessments in higher education—a move that threatens to undo decades of compositionists’ theoretical and pedagogical advancements in the field of writing assessment. In light of these formidable obstacles, I do not presume that all institutions of higher learning will be able to implement and sustain rhetorical, social constructivist assessment practices, such as DCM. Indeed, I know that writing program administrators may need to fight to establish DCM. As a result, this section presents writing program administrators with a ten-question guide, based upon Broad’s (2003) study, to determine their readiness to put DCM into practice despite political and commercial obstacles.
White (2005a) repeated his familiar maxim to English faculty and writing program administrators involved in large-scale writing assessment: “Assess thyself or assessment will be done unto thee” (p. 33). White (2001a) explained that in the “modern era” of assessment, English assessment is both politically and locally-defined by English faculty and administrators (p. 307). However, White (2005a) recently warned that the “misuse of assessment,” (p. 34) due to English faculty’s failure to take on the responsibility of assessment, as well as the government’s and testing corporations’ success in standardizing writing assessment measures, threatens to usurp valid, locally-controlled assessment practices (pp. 26-34). Composition educators in the modern era ultimately face the political and corporate drive for standardized, objective, homogenized proficiency and placement assessment measures in higher education—forces that intend to wrestle control of assessment from compositionists.

In September 2005, Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings created the Commission on Higher Education (Baron, 2006). Karen W. Arenson (2006) reported that the Bush administration appointed this commission to study the viability of expanding the “standardized testing,” which would likely test writing ability, of the No Child Left Behind Act into institutions of higher education to “prove that students are learning.” In addition, Kelly Field (2006) explained that Charles Miller, the commission’s chairman, has insisted that while the Commission will not implement a single, standardized exam for higher education, he surmised that the public’s demand for accountability and comparable assessment results will eventually force institutions to adopt one standardized exam. Miller also suggested that the Commission may advocate that accreditation agencies take an active role in standardizing testing and that federal funding to institutions could depend upon institutions’ implementation of such tests. Field pointed out that two tests designed by testing corporations, the “Collegiate Learning
Assessment” (CLA) and the “Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress,” have already emerged as likely candidates.

During the 2006 Conference on College Composition and Communication session “No Students Left Behind: Writing and the Secretary of Education’s Commission on the Future of Higher Education,” prominent composition scholars responded to the Bush administration’s attempt to standardize exit assessment measures in higher education. For instance, Dennis Baron (2006) proclaimed that the session’s purpose was to inject the composition field’s views on literacy, specifically reading and writing, into the “public policy picture” with respect to the Commission’s recent statements. Andrea Lunsford (2006) and Jackie Jones Royster (2006) provided a direct response to the Commission’s drive for standardization and the perception that higher education has not been held accountable. Lunsford proclaimed that composition educators’ “work on assessment across the decades demonstrates over and over again that writing is too complex a set of practices to measure in any single one-size fits all way”; therefore, testing standardization squanders financial and human resources. She argued that compositionists are already devoted “to accountability and accessibility” and “have mountains of research to demonstrate that accountability.” In addition, Royster argued that scholars must battle the “myth of nonaccountability,” the public perception that “professional educators, colleges, [and] universities resist assessment.” Consequently, she argued that educators must “convey more clearly to our publics what we do…as educators of colleges and universities, and we cannot continue to let other people set the terms of what that means” with respect to assessment measures.

With regard to placement assessment, Patricia Freitag Ericsson and R. H. Haswell (2006) explained that institutions of higher learning are quickly adopting “online computer essay
scoring” (p. 2). Liz Hamp-Lyons (2005) argued that the College Board’s “new” SAT-I is “déjà vu all over again,” for it emphasizes “grammatical competence” and an impromptu, 25-minute, writing section (pp. 153-154). Elliot (2005) explained that the SAT I incorporated the writing exam, an “essay to be scored holistically,” in March 2005 (see Elliot, 2005, pp. 230-242, for the history of the SAT I exam). Similarly, William Condon (2006) proclaimed that “machine scoring represents a step backward” to “indirect tests”—assessment “dictated to us by an outside agency” (p. 212).

Even though Cindy James (2006) argued for the validity of the computerized essay scoring program *IntelliMetric* based upon correlations between the program’s scores and faculty members’ scores (pp. 167-178), composition scholars have stressed that commercial computer-evaluation programs actually lack validity. Ericsson and Haswell (2006) argued that while software developers assure the “instrument validity” of their software, they have not validated “the software in terms of instructional adequacy, viability, and ethics” (p. 5). Condon (2006) argued that scoring by machines results in a loss of validity because “the assessment takes place on a national level, rather than on the local level” (p. 214). Moreover, he asserted that the most effective placement evaluators are instructors who make judgments based upon their curriculum: “Teacher/raters bring their knowledge of the instructional context with them, and that knowledge aids in making more accurate decisions” (p. 215). Alluding to the importance of constructivist content validity, Condon contended that placement decisions must attend to the actual writing assignments students will produce in their writing courses (p. 219). Echoing social constructivist principles and constructivist content validity, Broad (2006) called for rhetorical assessment that emphasizes “human relationships and interactions” and assessment that is connected to “the teaching of writing”—not assessment farmed out to computer programs (p. 233). In general,
White (2005a) argued that the College Board and the American College Testing Service’s holistically scored impromptu essays provide institutions with “crude,” “simple,” “ready-made placement information”; such impromptu essays are currently posed to appropriate local placement methods (pp. 29-30).

During the workshop *Dynamic Criteria Mapping in Action: Growing Evaluative Community Locally and Organically*, Broad (2007) offered the following questions to an audience full of writing program administrators interested in employing DCM to foresee both potential impediments and possibilities: “What benefits and obstacles can you anticipate to conducting DCM where you work?” “What opportunities exist for DCM in your institutional context?” and “What do you imagine a DCM process might look like in that context?” Based upon these questions and Broad’s (2003) study, I offer writing program administrators with a ten-question heuristic to begin determining their program’s readiness to implement social constructivist placement assessment models, such as DCM, in spite of political, corporate, and institutional obstacles. These questions are then discussed with respect to Broad’s “Benefits of DCM: Returns on the Investment” (pp. 120-123).

**Question 1:** To what extent are you and the instructors in your writing program involved in making placement decisions, and to what extent can you and the instructors become more involved in guiding placement practices?

**Question 2:** To what extent does your institution devote resources to assist your writing program in local placement assessment practices, and to what extent is your institution willing to devote additional resources to assist your writing program in these practices?
**Question 3:** To what extent do you and the instructors in your writing program discuss, implement, and maintain placement assessment practices, and to what extent are you and the instructors willing to discuss, implement, and maintain such practices?

**Question 4:** To what extent do your state and federal representatives expend political capital to support your writing program in local placement assessment practices, and to what extent are your state and federal representatives willing to support your writing program in such practices?

**Question 5:** To what extent are the writing program’s assessment measures—placement, exit, and curricular—documented for public discussion, and to what extent is the writing program willing to both publish and publicize these assessment practices?

**Question 6:** To what extent do assessment measures peripheral to the writing program, such as computer-evaluation placement programs and standardized placement exams, guide assessment practices to place students into courses in the program’s curriculum, and to what extent will these assessment measures guide future placement assessment practices?

**Question 7:** To what extent are students involved in or informed of placement assessment practices, and to what extent will they be involved or informed?

**Question 8:** To what extent do you and the instructors in the writing program validate and revise the placement program’s evaluative practices, and to what extent are you and the instructors willing to validate and revise these assessment practices?

**Question 9:** To what extent do you collaborate or share decision-making with the instructors in the writing program regarding placement assessment practices, and to what extent are you and the instructors willing to work together to make decisions?
Question 10: To what extent is the writing program’s teaching and curriculum aligned with actual placement assessment practices, and to what extent are you willing to align them?

The commitment of writing administrators, instructors, and educational and political institutions is the most crucial factor for the successful implementation of DCM in placement assessment contexts. Broad (2003) explained that DCM requires institutional, administrative, and instructional support: “Any significant changes in practices of teaching and assessment will require exceptional dedication and perseverance by faculty and administrators simply to overcome the inertia of how things have ‘always’ been done” (p. 120). Therefore, Questions 1 through 4 ask writing program administrators to examine both their current and potential commitment to local placement assessment practices as well as the current and potential commitment of their institution, instructors in the writing program, and state and federal representatives.

The commitment to communicate placement assessment measures to the public completely and truthfully is another important factor for the implementation of DCM in placement assessment contexts. Broad (2003) argued that “the public wants and deserves to know what goes on in writing programs” (p. 122), and DCM will “simultaneously educate the public about important features of our discipline and our teaching practice, thus protecting us [educators] from misunderstanding and undervaluation” (p. 123). As a result, Question 5 asks writing program administrators to study their current and potential commitment to fostering public relations by revealing in-house programmatic practices to the community.

The commitment to assessments that foreground educators making decisions for themselves is essential for the implementation of DCM in placement assessment contexts. Broad (2003, 2006) has called on writing program administrators to implement rhetorical assessments
that value educators’ local teaching practices. Question 6 asks writing program administrators to observe the current and potential influence of outside placement assessment measures, such as computer-evaluation programs and national exams, on local placement assessment practices.

The commitment to student participation in placement assessment practices is vital for the implementation of DCM in placement assessment contexts. Broad (2003) explained that DCM should both inform students of their instructors’ values by “providing a more complex and true portrait of how writing is learned, practiced, and valued” (p. 120) and elicit student input by “exploring students’ perspectives on DCM” (p. 121). Question 7 asks writing program administrators to investigate the current and potential level of student involvement in placement assessment practices.

The commitment to the ongoing revision of a writing program’s placement practices is essential for the implementation of DCM in placement assessment contexts. Broad (2003) pointed out that “DCM provides unprecedented quantity and quality of information about what goes on in a writing program--and how that program could be usefully changed” (p. 121), and DCM “promotes growth and transformation of writing programs” (p. 122). Question 8 asks writing program administrators to appraise their current and potential commitment for validating and improving placement assessment practices.

The commitment to collaboration or communal decision-making regarding placement assessment practices is central to the implementation of DCM in placement assessment contexts. Broad (2003) argued that educators use DCM to “forge pedagogical policy” that “leads to a sense of ownership and belonging” for those involved (p. 121). Question 9 asks writing program administrators to examine their current and potential willingness to cooperate and share ownership of curricular values and policy with colleagues and instructors.
Finally, the commitment to align placement assessment practices with the writing program’s curriculum is needed to implement DCM in placement assessment contexts. Broad (2003) explained that “for the assessment to be relevant, valid, and fair…it must judge students according to the same skills and values by which they have been taught” (p. 11). He concluded his work by declaring that DCM “will help us [educators] move into a new era of writing assessment in which the endeavors of teaching and assessing writing are theoretically aligned and are therefore mutually supportive” (p. 137). Question 10 asks writing program administrators to examine their current and potential willingness to align teaching practices and curriculum with placement assessment practices. In general, all of these questions ask writing program administrators to consider their readiness and willingness to begin a DCM study—questions to consider before asking the next logical question Broad (2007) offered during the workshop: “What specific steps do you need to take to succeed with DCM?” Any steps, evidently, will be specific to the local context of the writing program and institution.

Implications for Further Research

This section explores the possibilities for the publication and further discussion of this dissertation study, issues related to Broad’s (2003) “Publicizing, Learning, and Teaching from the Dynamic Criteria Map” stage, in which educators publish their DCM findings to elicit public debate (p. 134), and possibilities for the revision and continuation of this DCM study in placement assessment contexts, issues related to Broad’s “Revising the DCM” stage, in which educators revise and conduct ongoing DCM studies (pp. 134-135). This section concludes with implications this study poses for researchers in the writing assessment field.

Regarding the “Publicizing, Learning, and Teaching from the Dynamic Criteria Map” stage, writing program administrators must periodically decide when to share their maps with the
public. Broad argued that “instructors, administrators, and researchers of writing, as well as our students, our colleagues in the academy, and the general public, all deserve both a rigorous inquiry into what we really value and a detailed document recording the results of that inquiry” (p. 13). Broad (2003) explained that the purpose of his work was to help program instructors and administrators discern, discuss, and distribute the DCM of their rhetorical values: “The book points the way toward a new method for discovering, negotiating, and publicizing what we really value in students’ writing” (pp. 5, 128).

Even though this dissertation’s DCM findings will be published and available to everyone, the GSW program will ultimately decide the most important issue pertaining to this study—whether to involve everyone in the program in discussing these findings (Director, Associate Director, Assistant Director, full-time instructors, and part-time instructors) and whether to publicize these findings within the program, university, and community. If so, the GSW program may follow Broad’s (2003) recommendations that a DCM document include an introduction written collaboratively by administrators and instructors which explains “the goals, methods, and virtues of Dynamic Criteria Mapping”; “constellations” and “lists of specific rhetorical criteria, including lists of synonyms and antonyms where available and references to sample texts to illustrate what each criterion looks like in action”; “full sample texts discussed in articulation sessions”; and “program documents” (p. 134). This study incorporated all of these elements (with the exception of specific references to sample texts); however, due to the constraints of the dissertation format, program administrators may consider reformatting the findings for an in-program or institutional audience.

Concerning Broad’s “Revising the DCM” stage, in which educators revise and/or conduct ongoing DCM studies (pp. 134-135), the GSW program can decide whether to continue and/or
revise the DCM research after the publication of this dissertation study. To be “truly dynamic,” Broad (2003) argued that the Dynamic Criteria Mapping process should be employed continually to revise program documents to articulate evolving values (p. 134). He contended that maps evolve as “works in progress,” and administrators and instructors must continue to work together to amend their maps (p. 134).

If the GSW program decides to continue the research, administrators should generally employ the streamlined DCM research approach outlined in the “DCM Heuristic for Placement Assessment Practices” (pp. 156-183) section in this chapter. In addition, placement program administrators, as well as administrators at other institutions, should consider Lynne’s (2004) “Questions Raised by the Principle of Ethics” before presenting DCM findings to a wider programmatic or institutional audience. Lynne’s questions, about people involved in assessment decisions, will help administrators appreciate their various audiences before moving to strengthen their placement program’s constructivist content validity and before revising the study for continued research:

- Who has a stake in the assessment?
- How accountable is each party for the assessment decisions?
- Based on their accountability, what role should each play in the design of the assessment?
- What can each party contribute to the assessment? What is their area of expertise?
- Based on their potential contributions, what role should each play in the design of the assessment (p. 138)?

Lynne argued that an “ethical assessment” “remains accountable…to all stakeholders” (p. 138). With respect to DCM research, writing program administrators should consider several important issues based upon Lynne’s questions before discussing and publicizing DCM findings.
These questions should help writing program administrators understand the audiences of their DCM research before moving forward with program revision and/or continued DCM research. Framed in this rhetorical context, several relevant questions emerge regarding DCM placement studies. What audiences would be invested in the consequences of the DCM placement research? What would be the audiences’ responsibilities in revising placement assessments based upon the DCM research? How can the audiences’ specialized knowledge benefit placement assessment revision with respect to the DCM research? How can and/or would the audiences contribute to placement assessment design, revision, and/or further DCM research?

This study may be continued to examine data sets collected from various audiences—evaluators, instructors, and students—that were excluded from this dissertation’s analysis. As discussed in Chapter Four, in addition to gathering and studying program documents, data was collected and/or transcribed from four groups of research participants: audio taped pair evaluation sessions, videotaped placement training sessions and audio taped norming sessions, questionnaires, and interviews with the “2006 GSW Placement Program Participants”; one focus group interview with the “2006 GSW Instructor Participants”; email questionnaires from “Former and Current GSW Instructors”; and essays from the “2006 BGSU Student Participants.”

An initial analysis of the data sets from the “2006 GSW Placement Program Participants,” however, made apparent that the data separated into two types—placement evaluators’ actual, live rhetorical values or criteria used in assessing placement essays and placement evaluators’ recollections of these same values or criteria used in evaluating these essays. Because the rhetorical criteria articulated in these two data sets (evaluators’ use of criteria and evaluators’ recollections of these same criteria) were often contradictory, the study focused primarily on placement evaluators’ synchronous, audio taped conversations. This
approach followed the main approach of Broad’s (2003) DCM study, which prioritized the rhetorical values or criteria educators actually used in portfolio assessment over recollections of these values. For consistency, all other data sets that focused on recollections or memories, such as the interview with the 2006 GSW Instructor Participants and email questionnaires collected from former and current GSW instructors, were excluded from the formal data analysis, findings, and discussion presented in Chapter Four. Videotaped placement training sessions, audio taped norming sessions, and program documents, however, were included to describe the writing program’s curricular criteria. (Refer to Chapter Four’s “Focused Data Sets and Research Questions,” pp. 87-94, for the complete discussion of how and why the data sets and principal and supporting research questions were refocused for the final data analysis.)

The excluded data sets that focused on placement evaluators’ and instructors’ recollections, including interviews with the “2006 GSW Placement Program Participants” and “2006 GSW Instructor Participants” and email questionnaires collected from “Former and Current GSW Instructors,” could be studied to explore and/or reconcile contradictions between placement readers’ evaluative practices and perceptions of these practices. Moreover, because transcribed placement discussions include references to students’ placement essays, the essays collected from the “2006 BGSU Student Participants” could be studied in light of the evaluators’ discussions. Regarding interviews, Broad (2003) asked his study’s participants about specific moments involving evaluative conflict in norming or trio sessions, and he studied and analyzed their responses. Likewise, in this study, interviewees were asked to discuss specific, placement decisions; however, these responses were not formally analyzed. These responses could be analyzed, compared, contrasted, and/or integrated with this study’s results, and perhaps, incorporated into this study’s Dynamic Criteria Maps. In addition, because Broad explained that
DCM studies should incorporate and examine sample student essays (pp. 128-129), future studies could integrate an analysis of the students’ collected sample placement essays with this study’s analysis of the evaluative criteria which placement evaluators used to assess them.

This dissertation has implications for the GSW program and for researchers in the field of writing assessment. Ruth Ray (1993) explained that composition researchers construct both “local knowledge,” “knowledge for the community of teachers within one’s department, school, community, district, or state” (p. 86), and “global knowledge,” “knowledge…for the field of composition” (p. 90). This dissertation’s purpose was to extend the benefits of DCM to placement assessment practices by validating the hypothesis that DCM can be used to examine and understand placement assessment practices and to offer local and global contributions: to provide a focused validation argument to strengthen the GSW Placement Program’s constructivist content validity (the relationship between the Placement Program’s CWA practices and the writing program’s curriculum) locally, and to provide a theoretical and pedagogical heuristic for applying this DCM placement study at other institutions globally.

To move beyond the immediate scope of this study’s analysis and data sets, DCM placement studies may examine the consequences of placement evaluators’ assessment decisions upon stakeholders outside of the writing program. Recently, Moss (2007) asked, “What are the consequences--scientific, economic, political--to the profession and communities we serve by making these different choices [in assessment]” (p. 96)? DCM reveals educators’ rhetorical values to multiple stakeholders in multiple contexts, which provides “substantial educational, ethical, [and] political advantages” (Broad, 2003, p. 123), to improve teaching and learning and to produce valid assessments. Broad argued that “DCM continues progress in composition
toward more valid assessment and coordinates teaching and evaluation to better serve the needs of students, faculty, and the public” (p.122).

Although this study provided DCM procedures for the validation of placement readers’ evaluative practices with respect to the GSW program’s curriculum--which is at the heart of a constructivist content validity inquiry--future DCM studies in placement assessment contexts may identify, study, and analyze the impact and validity of these assessments on students, colleagues, and community members. Such studies may offer additional avenues for understanding and improving both rhetorical placement assessment practices and the consequences of such assessment decisions as an aspect of constructivist content validity inquiries.
REFERENCES


Bowling Green State University Placement Test Committee. (2005). *Report from the Placement Test Committee*. (Available from the General Studies Writing Program, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH 43403)


CCCC Committee on Teaching, Learning, and Assessing Writing in Digital Environments.


English Department. (1959-60). Freshman Composition Courses. (Available from the Center for Archival Collections, 5th Floor, Jerome Library, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH 43403)

English Department. (1960-61). Freshman Composition Courses. (Available from the Center for Archival Collections, 5th Floor, Jerome Library, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH 43403)

English Department. (1961-62). Freshman Composition Courses. (Available from the Center for Archival Collections, 5th Floor, Jerome Library, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH 43403)

English Department. (1972-73). General Information for Teaching Fellows and Graduate Assistants: General Studies Writing Program. (Available from the Center for Archival Collections, 5th Floor, Jerome Library, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH 43403)


General Studies Writing Program. (1974). *Rationale for English 110 in the General Studies Writing Program*. (Available from the Center for Archival Collections, 5th Floor, Jerome Library, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH 43403)


General Studies Writing Program. (2006-07). *Placement Test.* (Available from the General Studies Writing Program, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio 43403).


Hillocks, G. (1971). *Proposal for changes in the Freshman English Program.* (Available from the Center for Archival Collections, 5th Floor, Jerome Library, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH 43403)


APPENDIX A: PILOT STUDY

Introduction

The pilot study, approved by the university’s HSRB, resulted in revised, focused research questions and a DCM methodology for studying the constructivist content validity of the Placement Program in the study. The section “Objective” (pp. 213-216) discusses how the pilot study was designed to revise the original research questions and instruments for a specific adaptation of Broad’s (2003) DCM research model. The section “Research Participants” (pp. 216-217) provides a brief overview of the two groups of research participants: the 2006 GSW Placement Prompt Committee members and the 2005 GSW Placement Program evaluators and administrators. The section “Interview Procedures” (pp. 217-220) outlines the data collection procedures concerning recording and interviewing research participants and the foci of these interviews. The section “Data Analysis” (pp. 220-225) describes the procedures for the data analysis; Broad’s (2003) Dynamic Criteria Mapping process was employed to analyze the Placement Prompt Committee members’ deliberations and interviews, and traditional coding procedures were used to organize the placement evaluators’ individual and group interviews into thematic categories. Finally, the section “Results” (pp. 225-253) presents the pilot study results, and the section “Conclusions” (pp. 254-267) reviews the rationale for the study’s principal research question and supporting research questions.

Objective

This dissertation’s pilot study was conducted to provide a specific focus for the study, and consequently, to revise the original research questions and instruments (see “Appendix E: Original Study Methodology,” pp. 658-660, for the HSRB approved instruments that corresponded to the original principal and supporting research questions discussed below).
Auerbach and Silverstein (2003) explained that the researcher must review relevant research in order to identify the research question and focus of the study (p. 13). The original principal research question, supporting research questions, and research instruments grew directly out of Broad (2003), Haswell (1998, 2001a, 2001b), and Smith’s (1993) discussions of how instructors relied upon their expertise as teachers to make rhetorical assessment decisions. The original research questions asked what rhetorical values guided university placement evaluators in placing students’ essays and how evaluators relied upon their placement training, and most importantly, their experience as teachers as articulated by Haswell’s (1998, 2001a, 2001b) exemplar categorization and Smith’s (1993) expert model in making placement decisions. (Refer to “Applicability of Exit Assessment Theory to Placement Assessment Theory,” pp. 22-32, in “Chapter Two: Theoretical Rationale for the DCM Research Model” for the discussion of Haswell and Smith’s placement models.)

**Original Principal Research Question**
What rhetorical values guide BGSU’s GSW Program placement evaluators in placing students into one of the first-year writing courses, English 110 (Developmental Writing), English 111 (Introductory Writing), or English 112 (Varieties of English)?

**Original Supporting Research Questions**
- To what extent do readers rely upon their experience and knowledge as teachers to guide their placement decisions?
- How is teaching experience linked to placement decisions? In other words, to what extent do placement evaluators rely on Bob Broad’s (2003) contextual criteria involving the expert model in placement assessment or Richard Haswell’s exemplar categorization?
- To what extent do placement evaluators rely on the entrance-level “textual” criteria for placement as detailed in the GSW Placement Evaluators’ Handbook and training sessions? More specifically, to what extent does the placement evaluation training carry over to actual placement decisions?
- Are there rhetorical values that guide placement decisions not included within the defined parameters of the placement materials and training sessions?

The original research questions and instruments, based largely upon Chapter Two’s review of research of current exit and placement assessment, provided a starting point for the
study; however, the pilot study provided more refined research questions and methodologies for the study. In particular, the primary goal of the pilot study was to adapt Broad’s (2003) DCM research model to study how placement evaluators’ curricular expert knowledge influenced their placement decisions. To adapt Broad’s research model, the pilot study examined how the GSW placement model functioned by studying what research participants actually said about the design and practice of this model. According to Auerbach & Silverstein (2003), qualitative researchers “learn from the people they study” and view their research participants as “expert informants” who have direct, relevant “life experiences” pertinent to the study (pp. 26-27). The pilot study focused on the experiences of two groups of expert informants--the designers of the 2006 GSW Online Writing Placement Test and placement evaluators and administrators from the 2005 GSW Placement Program. As a result, the pilot study included two groups of participants--the 2006 GSW Placement Prompt Committee members and the 2005 GSW Placement Program evaluators and administrators.

The research participants provided information about the design and practice of the placement model. As designers of the placement test, the Placement Prompt Committee participants provided details concerning what committee members actually valued about the program’s locally-contextualized placement model and practices. They also provided information as to how the online writing placement test should function with respect to the GSW Placement Program and program curriculum. The 2005 Placement Program Participants supplied details about what factors would influence placement readers’ evaluative decisions during the 2006 Placement Program. This part of the pilot study was based upon the hypothesis that because the 2006 Placement Program used the same placement model as the 2005 Placement Program, the 2005 placement evaluators’ and administrators’ experiences could, to some extent,
predict the evaluative tendencies of 2006 placement evaluators. As discussed in Chapter Three’s “Setting of the Study,” pp. 52-64, I belonged to both groups of participants as a 2006 Placement Prompt Committee member and a 2005 Placement Evaluator.

**Research Participants**

The pilot study’s research participants included two groups: the 2006 GSW Placement Prompt Committee Participants and the 2005 Placement Program Participants. To protect the confidentiality of the participants in the pilot study in accordance with the university’s Human Subjects Review Board (HSRB) policies, each participant was given a first-name pseudonym in the pilot study; each name appears in quotation marks in the first reference. With respect to the 2006 GSW Placement Prompt Committee, there were four participants: “Gina,” “Olivia,” “Larissa,” and “Marlow.” Gina was the Placement Coordinator for the 2005 and 2006 Placement Programs, and she was the Chair of the 2006 GSW Placement Prompt Committee. Olivia, Larissa, and Marlow were full-time instructors in the program.

With regard to the 2005 GSW Placement Program, there were seven pilot study research participants: Gina, “Ben,” Olivia, “Loretta,” “Dorothy,” “Kristy,” and “Elaine.” Ben was the Assistant Placement Coordinator, and Olivia, Loretta, Dorothy, Kristy, and Elaine were placement evaluators for the 2005 Placement Program. With the exception of Gina, all of the research participants in this group were Teaching Assistants who had taught English 111 and English 112 in the program. Olivia, who was a research participant in both groups, was hired as a full-time instructor after the program concluded. During the 2005 Placement Program, there were eight placement evaluators, and five evaluators participated in the study; two placement evaluators chose not to participate in the pilot study, and as a member of the Placement Prompt
Committee and a placement evaluator during the 2005 Placement Program, I belonged to both groups of research participants.

**Interview Procedures**

The HSRB approved data collection methods for the pilot study began in January 2006 and ended in April 2006. As the principal researcher, I selected the participants, and collected, transcribed, and coded the data under the guidance of my dissertation advisor, Richard Gebhardt, and the HSRB office.

Regarding the 2006 GSW Placement Prompt Committee Participants, four placement prompt committee meetings were audio taped and transcribed; each meeting lasted between one and two hours. The Placement Prompt Committee met four times during the 2006 Spring Semester to select articles and write accompanying prompts for the online writing placement test. (Refer to “Appendix D: 2006 Online Placement Test,” pp. 656-657, for the 2006 Online Writing Placement Test.) Two scripted, structured interviews with Gina, Larissa, and Marlow and one interview with Olivia were audio taped and transcribed. The first interview followed up on the process of selecting reading selections for the online writing test, and the second interview followed up on the process of writing the prompts for the test. Concerning the 2005 GSW Placement Program participants, one individual interview with Gina, Ben, Loretta, Olivia, Dorothy, Kristy, and Elaine were audio taped and transcribed, and one focus group interview with Gina, Ben, Loretta, Olivia, Kristy, and Elaine was videotaped and transcribed.

Both the first and second individual interviews asked participants to discuss the rhetorical strategies and criteria Gina instructed the committee to use in choosing reading selections and writing the prompts for the online writing placement test (see “Appendix F: Finding Articles and Writing Prompts, pp. 661, for the official criteria). Bishop (1999) pointed out that in “structured
interviews,” questions are scripted and preset before the interview (p. 99). Similarly, Fontana and Frey (2000) explained that in the “structured interview,” researchers ask the participants predetermined questions and anticipate a narrow array of responses (p. 650). The interview scripts for both interviews were similar. However, as mentioned earlier, the first interview focused on choosing the reading selections, and the second interview emphasized writing the accompanying prompts. In the interviews, participants discussed how their experiences teaching in the GSW program influenced how they chose reading selections and wrote accompanying prompts and how these tasks affected how they taught writing courses. Participants were also asked to reflect on which criteria were frequently and rarely mentioned in the committee’s discussions; they were asked to comment on criteria they used during particular meetings after reading relevant transcript excerpts. More generally, they commented on the dynamic of the committee’s deliberations, such as how disagreements were resolved and consensus was usually achieved.

Research participants involved in the 2005 GSW Placement Program were asked to reflect on their experiences as placement evaluators and comment on the usefulness of research instruments for the study during each individual interview. Bishop (1999) asserted that structured interviews help the researcher focus and refine data collection methods (p. 99). Participants discussed their impressions of the 2005 GSW Placement Program; for instance, they reflected on key memorable moments; they explained how placement evaluation affected their teaching practices; they talked about concerns that came up during the Placement Program; they discussed their level of agreement with their evaluation partners; and they discussed the Placement Program’s model generally. They also commented on the usefulness of potential questionnaire questions for the study, questions that would ask 2006 placement evaluators to
reflect on evaluative factors that may influence their placement decisions. Participants were also invited to contribute additional questions to the questionnaire that would be useful in answering the original principal research question, and they were invited to share any concerns not mentioned in the interview.

During the focus group interview, research participants were asked to collaboratively predict concerns, evaluative strategies, difficulties, and changes in the evaluative tendencies of evaluators placing essays during the 2006 Placement Program. Fontana and Frey (2000) explained that in a “group interview,” or more specifically, in a “focus group,” researchers ask multiple participants specific questions at the same time (p. 651). In particular, this interview was conducted to facilitate brainstorming with individuals who had already served as placement evaluators during the 2005 Placement Program. Fontana and Frey (2000) contended that researchers conduct group interviews or focus groups for “exploratory” purposes—“to test a methodological technique,” “to try out a definition of a research problem,” “to identify key informants,” and to pretest “questionnaire wording, measurement scales, or other elements of survey design.” In addition, focus groups can be used for “brainstorming sessions” (p. 651). They asserted that researchers can use “exploratory interviews” to become more familiar with the research topic and setting (p. 652).

Based on their own experiences as placement evaluators, participants explored to what extent placement evaluators’ prior knowledge of the curriculum, prior training in portfolio assessment, and prior knowledge of students’ performances in their classes may affect evaluators’ decisions during the 2006 Placement Program. Participants were also asked to “to try out a definition of a research problem” (Fontana & Frey, 2000, p. 651), for they discussed issues and challenges they foresaw in addressing the original principal and supporting research
questions, and they proposed additional supporting research questions that would be useful in answering the principal research question. Finally, they shared additional concerns not addressed in the interview (see “Appendix G: Pilot Study Consent Forms and Interview Scripts,” pp. 662-670, for the HSRB approved interview scripts).

Data Analysis

The analysis of the data generated by 2006 Placement Prompt Committee Participants adapted Broad’s (2003) Dynamic Criteria Mapping process while the analysis of the data generated by the 2005 Placement Program Participants adhered to a traditional thematic coding process. As a result of the data analysis of the Placement Prompt Committee participants’ transcribed meetings and interviews, the pilot study mapped the criteria category “Finding Articles and Writing Prompts” and the three principal constellations “Appropriateness,” “Strategy,” and “The Placement Test” with supporting evaluative criteria in a Dynamic Criteria Map. Like Broad’s (2003) “Dynamic Criteria Map of City University’s Textual Qualities,” (p. 39) this pilot study’s Dynamic Criteria Map contained two principal elements to map a criteria category--Broad’s “evaluative criteria” and “constellations” (p. 30).

A Dynamic Criteria Map is comprised of the evaluative criteria of a given constellation. In other words, evaluative criteria--qualities or features being used to judge writing--comprise each constellation in a Dynamic Criteria Map. Several evaluative criteria are grouped together and visually connected within each constellation, and each constellation is connected within each Dynamic Criteria Map. For instance, Broad’s (2003) Dynamic Criteria Map of City University’s “Textual Qualities” contains the constellation “Aesthetic Constellation,” which includes the evaluative criteria “Interesting/Lively/Creative,” “Textured/Rich/Artful,” and “Humor” (p. 50).
Just as a constellation maps the interrelationships among evaluative criteria, the Dynamic Criteria Map highlights the interrelationships among constellations.

Broad’s (2003) study produced two main criteria categories: “Textual Criteria” and “Contextual Criteria” (pp. 32-33). Broad created a Dynamic Criteria map for one subcategory—“Textual Qualities”—of the criteria category “Textual Criteria” for his study. Broad (2003) created the “Dynamic Criteria Map of City University’s Textual Qualities” (p. 39) based upon the live, communal deliberations of instructors making pass or fail portfolio decisions (see “Figure 3: Dynamic Criteria Map of City University’s Textual Qualities,” Broad, 2003, p. 39). A Dynamic Criteria Map is dynamic in that it captures the criteria instructors actually used during acts of assessment. Broad (2003) explained that the DCM process produces a “conceptual map” (p. 24) that provides a “detailed, complex and useful portrait of any writing program’s dynamics” (p. 13) and brings to light rhetorical values instructors use “in the very act of teaching and assessment writing together” (p. 120).

The Placement Prompt Committee research participants’ transcripts were coded in order to create a Dynamic Criteria Map and conceptually map the committee’s communal, collaborative deliberations; overall, the map highlighted and connected the criteria committee members used in selecting articles and writing prompts for the online writing placement test. The pilot study adapted Broad’s (2003) Dynamic Criteria Mapping process to revise the original research questions.

Whereas Broad culled rhetorical criteria from transcriptions and observations and resisted “presuppositions and expectations” about the data (p. 30), the pilot study focused on a set of official criteria and additional notable criteria the Placement Prompt Committee dynamically utilized in meetings and discussed in follow-up interviews. Before the placement prompt
committee meetings, Gina, the Placement Coordinator and Committee Chair, gave each committee member two lists of criteria, the “Finding Articles and Writing Prompts” (2006) criteria lists, and she directed the committee members to use these criteria in the two stages of test development (see “Appendix F: Finding Articles and Writing Prompts,” p. 661, for the official criteria).

The 2006 Placement Prompt Committee, an internal GSW committee, was charged with two main tasks in designing the test: finding and selecting articles and writing prompts to accompany those articles. The committee chose and collaboratively discussed approximately 45 articles from the Academic Search Premier database, available only through the university library, over the course of three meetings before deciding on the final three articles. Before deciding on the final three articles and nine prompts, the committee wrote 18 prompts individually for six final articles and revised and/or eliminated these prompts and articles collaboratively (see “Appendix D: 2006 Online Placement Test,” pp. 656-657, for the entire placement test. Citations of articles are included, rather than full articles, due to copyright restrictions.)

According to “Appendix F: Finding Articles and Writing Prompts” (p. 661) official criteria list, the criteria for selecting articles include “subject,” “readability,” “prior knowledge,” “appropriateness,” and “length”; the criteria for writing prompts included “clarity,” “relevance,” “amount of information,” “use of quotations,” and “strategy.” Although the committee followed an official list of criteria, some of the criteria did not emerge but were prompted; however, committee members dynamically used these criteria and others, so relationships among these evaluative criteria emerged as well as evaluative sub criteria, which provided nuanced elaborations of principal criteria.
Accordingly, the Placement Prompt Committee’s deliberations were rhetorical and dynamic. Even though Gina oversaw the committee, articles were selected and prompts were written by consensus. She encouraged different professional opinions and even disagreements on the way to finding common ground among diverse viewpoints. As a result, while the official criteria lists gave equal weight to each criterion, the dynamic of the committee’s discussions organized criteria hierarchically and provided rich detail for official as well as additional criteria in the Dynamic Criteria Map (see “Figure 4: Dynamic Criteria Map for Finding Articles and Writing Prompts,” p. 245). Specifically, four committee meeting transcripts and both interviews were coded for these official criteria and any other criteria that emerged. With respect to the qualitative analysis, definitions of the criteria and sub criteria are provided in order of frequency coded, which comprise the constellations.

This pilot study adapted Broad’s terminology “constellation” and “evaluative criteria” (p. 30). However, committee members were not engaged in writing assessment but finding articles and writing accompanying prompts for placement assessment, so the criteria and constellations reference values invoked during the selection of article and writing of accompanying prompts. Answering Broad’s (2003) call for “constellations” supported by “lists of synonyms and antonyms,” (p. 134) the pilot study provided in vivo antonyms and synonyms, or words and phrases taken directly from the transcripts, from the four transcribed committee meetings and follow-up interviews for each constellation’s criteria and sub criteria. Broad (2003) explained that each evaluative criteria in his Dynamic Criteria Map is described by instructors’ “verbatim excerpts” or actual “comments” comprising the list of synonyms and antonyms (p. 126). Although many synonym and antonym words and phrases are direct quotes from committee members, not all of these criteria and sub criteria are in vivo codes, but they are intended to
represent the larger criteria or concepts at work in committee members’ decisions. In general, the pilot study analysis identified main criteria or concepts, in light of Strauss and Corbin’s (1998) analysis of “whole sentence or paragraphs” for “major ideas” to be followed by a “more detailed analysis of that concept” (p. 120).

The 2005 Placement Program research participants, however, focused on memories of past evaluative decisions, rather than live assessment decisions. As a result, a Dynamic Criteria Map of criteria was inappropriate because the live, dynamic evaluation process of evaluators’ placement decisions could no longer be captured. Instead, the participants focused on evaluative recollections; therefore, the pilot employed traditional interviews methods to uncover evaluators’ memories of their placement assessment experiences and organize those experiences into themes. The term “themes,” instead of criteria, is more appropriate because these themes described the factors that may influence placement readers’ evaluative decisions rather than a dynamic, criteria-based, decision-making process.

Because the individual and focus group interviews revealed potential evaluative influences on 2006 placement evaluators based upon the experiences of 2005 placement evaluators, themes were deliberately prompted. The following themes represented significant issues coded from the interview transcripts: “crucial evaluative decisions,” effect of disagreement on evaluation,” “effect of evaluation on teaching,” “evaluators’ general strategies,” “evaluators’ initial concerns,” “evaluators’ later concerns,” “effect of idiosyncrasies on evaluation,” “evaluators’ initial strategies,” “effect of norming on evaluation,” “effect of other influences on evaluation,” “effect of pairing on evaluation,” “effect of placement coordinators on evaluation,” “effect of prior knowledge of students’ performances,” “problematic placements,”
“issue of honesty,” and “implicit rhetorical values.” The interview questions were written to explore many of these themes; however, some of the themes emerged without prompting.

**Results**

The “Results” section provides the results of the data collected from the two groups of pilot study research participants—the 2006 Placement Prompt Committee and 2005 Placement Program Participants. This section provides a description of the criteria, sub criteria, and constellations that comprise “Figure 4: Dynamic Criteria Map for Finding Articles and Writing Prompts” (p. 245) for the 2006 GSW Placement Prompt Committee’s deliberations and interviews, and it presents definitions of the principal themes that emerged from the 2005 Placement Evaluator interviews.

The Placement Prompt Committee’s “Figure 4: Dynamic Criteria Map for Finding Articles and Writing Prompts” (p. 245) contains three principal constellations: the “Appropriateness,” “Strategy,” and “The Placement Test” constellations. These constellations foregrounded the importance of constructivist content validity: the relationship between the GSW Placement Program’s CWA practices and the program’s curriculum. The “Appropriateness” constellation of the article selection stage of the online writing placement test design referred to the type of writing committee members wanted the article to elicit. In order of frequency invoked, the criteria “persuasive prompt” (articles should draw out curricular, persuasive responses); “readability” (articles should present clear language, ideas, and graphics to all test takers); “prior knowledge” (articles should provide familiar topics); “subject” (articles should be interesting to the widest range of students); “unhindered response” (articles should facilitate students’ persuasive responses); “exemplar” (articles should serve as curricular exemplars and academic models of writing); “sophistication” (articles should make known the
entire range of students’ writing abilities); “audience” (articles should involve traditional and nontraditional students as primary audiences); “relevance” (articles should coincide with persuasive prompt ideas); “length” (articles should provide adequate content); and “currency” (articles should present current and familiar topics) described various strategies for selecting articles that would assist students in producing persuasive placement essays that could be assessed in relation to the GSW curriculum.

The “Appropriateness” Constellation of the writing prompts stage of the online writing placement test design refers to the type of student writing that committee members wanted the prompt to elicit. In order of frequency invoked, the criteria “curriculum” (prompts should draw out a specific GSW assignment); “amount of information” (prompts should provide students with just enough information to help them employ one of the English 110/111/112 rhetorical strategies); “clarity” (prompts should invoke a single English 110/111/112 rhetorical strategy); “prior knowledge” (prompts should provide familiar topics that would help students write persuasively); “unhindered response” (prompts should facilitate students’ responses); “subject” (prompts should engage the students); “relevance” (prompts should coincide with the main ideas of the article); and “use of quotations” (prompts should include quotations to help students write responses) described strategies for writing prompts that would assist students in using the persuasive, rhetorical strategies taught in English 110, English 111, and English 112. As a result, essays that employed these strategies could be assessed with respect to the program’s curriculum and placed appropriately into the course sequence.

The “Appropriateness” and “Strategy” constellations and supporting criteria and sub criteria were complimentary; they emphasized the consequence of selecting articles and writing prompts--students should be able write persuasive essays that could then be judged against the
program’s curriculum. This emphasis on constructivist content validity culminates in “The Placement Test” constellation, which integrates key properties of both constellations to emphasize the importance of the link between placement assessment and the curriculum. This constellation outlines the elements of the online writing placement test writing prompt in relation to the article—the prompt must elicit a curricular strategy, quote from the article, provide a topical focus for the writer, and encourage examples from the article, outside readings, and personal experience.

The 2005 Placement Program Participants’ individual and focus group interviews provided information concerning how placement evaluators and administrators utilized the GSW placement model to predict how placement evaluators would likely employ the program’s placement model in 2006. Participants discussed potential evaluative issues that may influence 2006 placement readers’ evaluative decisions. For instance, participants reflected on how placement assessment familiarizes placement evaluators with how students’ real writing skill levels on the placement test parallel students’ actual writing skill levels in the GSW classes (theme “Effect of Evaluation on Teaching”); how evaluators match students’ essays to the GSW curriculum and make difficult and problematic placement decisions (themes “Crucial Evaluative Decisions,” “Effect of Evaluation on Teaching,” and “Problematic Placements”); how evaluators achieve consensus in making placement decisions in pairs (themes “Effect of Disagreement on Evaluation” and “Effect of Pairing on Evaluation”); how evaluators’ assessment concerns evolve over the course of the Placement Program (themes “Evaluators’ Initial Concerns” and “Evaluators’ Later Concerns”); how evaluators’ idiosyncrasies influenced their placement assessment practices (theme “Effect of Idiosyncrasies on Evaluation”); how evaluators’ assessment practices are influenced by placement training and norming sessions and the
Placement Coordinator’s instructions (themes “Effect of Norming” and “Effect of Placement Coordinators on Evaluation”); how evaluators prioritize high-order and low-order rhetorical concerns in assessing placement essays (theme “Evaluators’ General Strategies”); how evaluators’ teaching practices are influenced by placement reading and how evaluators draw upon their experiences teaching writing to make placement decisions (theme “Effect of Evaluation on Teaching”). Participants also provided advice for uncovering the implicit or unspoken rhetorical values of 2006 placement evaluators (themes “Implicit Rhetorical Values” and “Issue of Honesty”). In particular, the participants input and advice facilitated the revision of the original principal research questions, supporting research questions, and study research instruments. Overall, the summary of the findings from both parts of the pilot study—the design of the online writing placement test and the study of placement readers’ evaluative tendencies—resulted in the revised principal and supporting research questions.

A detailed, thorough summary of the results summarized above, with regard to both groups of participants, concludes this section. Concerning the 2006 Placement Prompt Committee Participants, constellations are presented as headings and criteria and sub criteria as sub headings for the two stages of the test design—finding articles and writing prompts— in “Summary of 2006 Placement Prompt Committee Participants’ Criteria and Constellations” (pp. 229-244). Refer to this summary for definitions and in vivo synonyms and antonyms of the criteria and sub criteria that comprise the three constellations of this pilot study’s Dynamic Criteria Map (see “Figure 4: Dynamic Criteria Map for Finding Articles and Writing Prompts,” p. 245). “Interrelationships among Criteria and Constellations in the ‘Dynamic Criteria Map for Finding Articles and Writing Prompts” (pp. 240-244) discusses how the constellations, criteria, and sub criteria are interrelated within “Figure 4: Dynamic Criteria Map for Finding Articles and
Writing Prompts” (p. 245) to support the importance of constructivist content validity. With regard to the 2005 Placement Program participants, principal themes are provided as headings followed by definitions and supporting in vivo quotes from the research participants in “Summary of 2005 Placement Participants’ Themes” (pp. 245-267).

**Summary of 2006 Placement Prompt Committee Participants’ Criteria and Constellations**

This section provides a summary of the results for the 2006 Placement Prompt Committee Participants, which highlights the interrelationships among the constellations, criteria, and sub criteria from the Finding Articles and Writing Prompts stages of the test design. “Figure 4: Dynamic Criteria Map for Finding Articles and Writing Prompts” (p. 245) demonstrates how the criteria and sub criteria are connected and interrelated with respect to the GSW curriculum, and consequently, highlights the importance of constructivist content validity. While a quantitative analysis of the data was not conducted, the criteria and sub criteria in each section appear in the approximate order of frequency coded; a particular criteria or sub criteria was counted each time a committee member brought up, responded to, or elaborated on a criteria or sub criteria. However, because criteria sometimes overlapped, the number of times committee members invoked criteria and sub criteria was approximated.

**“Finding Articles” Constellation, Themes, and Sub Themes**

“Appropriateness” was by far the most frequently invoked constellation for selecting articles for the placement test; furthermore, all of the official criteria, as well as any additional criteria, with respect to this stage of the test design supported this principal constellation. Because “appropriateness” involved all of the official and unofficial criteria, it was the principal constellation for this stage of test design. According to “Appendix F: Finding Articles and Writing Prompts,” p. 661, “appropriateness” refers to an article that “lends itself to the type of writing we want the students to do.” In other words, students should “easily see that there is a controversy or debate about the subject,” and “use the material to support their own opinion about the subject.” During a placement prompt committee meeting, Gina (personal communication, January 25, 2006) pointed out that while the article did not have to be persuasive, the student must be able to write an argument based on the piece.

**Appropriateness Constellation**

The criteria in the “appropriateness” constellation included the following in order of frequency: “persuasive prompt,” “readability,” “prior knowledge,” “subject,” “unhindered response,” “exemplar,” “sophistication,” “relevance,” “audience,” “length,” and “currency.”

**Persuasive Prompt**

*Synonyms:* they would be arguing, like proposing a solution to the problem or speculating about causes; it would spur, for those students, an argument in support of coming to college; it could even get them into proposing, or trying to persuade high school students what it takes to get ready for college; a causes kind of prompt; the
position that you could argue; turn it into problem-solution; what solutions might you suggest, or what are the causes; invited to argue

Antonyms: largely informational; it’s all how-to; don’t know what you could do with that

The first criterion was “persuasive response.” According to this criterion, placement prompt committee members wanted articles that would encourage students to write an argument, articles that would allow committee members to write three persuasive prompts, and articles that would not lead students to produce informative essays. As committee members began selecting and rejecting articles, they visualized prompts that paralleled persuasive essay assignments in the course sequence, such as a “position,” “causes,” and “solutions.” During one meeting, Gina (personal communication, February 14, 2006) suggested questions for one prompt, “Is this an accurate representation, or what solutions might you suggest, or what are the causes?” Similarly, Olivia (personal communication, February 23, 2006), a committee member, looked to see that each article would “work well for prompts for argumentative essays.” As a result, committee members could not always think of persuasive prompts for the articles, which sometimes indicated that the article was not suitable. At this stage in the process, committee members were already thinking about possible prompts for the online writing placement test.

Readability

The second criterion was “readability,” and there were three sub criteria—“readability of language,” “readability of ideas,” and “readability of visuals.” According to the Finding Articles and Writing Prompts list, “readability” meant that students must “be able to comprehend the language used and overall ideas presented in the article.”

Readability of Language

Synonyms: the vocabulary is great; the technological terms like pop ups and banners…I think most students would be familiar with

Antonyms: a few words that I was a little concerned about; a lot of vocab that I circled; a couple of acronyms; There’s some vocabulary--“ubiquitous”; worried about some of the vocabulary, like “awakened,” “refinement,” “pigment,” and “ambivalence”; a few words, like “inoculate”; hard to give prompts and some medical talk in there; few terms I was concerned about; people were concerned about the technological terms; notion of course casting—because I wasn’t familiar with that term

According to the first sub criterion “readability of language,” committee members looked to exclude articles that contained too many advanced vocabulary words (e.g., “co-op,” “ubiquitous”), ambiguous acronyms, unclear modifying phrases and clauses, and technical and/or professional jargon. Gina (personal communication, January 23, 2006) explained that the committee can provide the students with two definitions, and students can look up words within the 24-hour period. She (personal communication, February 23 and February 14, 2006) explained that if the article is too advanced for students, the piece may prevent them from submitting their best persuasive essays. Consequently, students may not have enough prior knowledge or interest to connect with the piece. Overall, too many unclear vocabulary words indicate that the article may be too advanced for the students, which alludes to the “readability of ideas” sub criterion.
Readability of Ideas

**Synonyms:** 110 to 111 students wouldn’t have any problems digesting this; I don’t there would be any problems with the range of students understanding it and having their opinion on it; they can still understand the article if they just skip over that

**Antonyms:** might be a little bit too advanced for some of our students; none of the larger words used in this article are necessary to the meaning of the overall article; I don’t think they could connect to it if they can’t connect it to how much oil costs them; it’s way to advanced; they might be familiar with Thoreau; a lot of historical references which I think they would understand; was a few terms I was concerned about or concepts; I don’t think the charter schools are something they’re unfamiliar with anymore; students who are not yet experienced in and practiced in making that kind of take a leap; students for whom that is not a familiar concept; the piece is written above them; they might read it and not understand it

With respect to the second sub criterion “readability of ideas,” committee members also chose articles based upon whether all students would be able to understand the concepts presented in the articles. The committee looked negatively on articles that did not include students as a primary audience, articles that required class discussion, articles that required technical or specialized knowledge, and articles that included too many nuanced historical or literary references. As a rule, committee members looked for articles that would appeal to the beginning point in the placement category range--English 110. For instance, with respect to one article, Larissa (personal communication, February 14, 2006) favorably remarked, “I don’t think the article would be too much for a 110 student to read and understand.”

Readability of Visuals

**Synonyms:** you really need a photo; a photo would be great to go with it; the article would be a good one as long as it has the accompanying visual

The third sub criterion that emerged was “readability of visuals.” According to this theme, committee members worried that students would be able to understand the concepts presented in the article only if photographs and/or graphics accompanied the pieces.

Prior Knowledge

The third criterion was “prior knowledge.” According to “Appendix F: Finding Articles and Writing Prompts,” p. 661, the criterion “prior knowledge” refers to “articles that can be fully understood without prior knowledge of the subject.” With respect to this theme, there were three sub criteria--“topic,” “experience,” and “speculation.”

**Topic**

**Synonyms:** a topic students would be familiar with in high school;

**Antonyms:** it may be new information; they [students] might not have any clue about that; I don’t think they have familiarity with that; there could be a sizable portion of our students that don’t even know what it is; not news watchers; some historical references...like Chauncey and the Educational Testing Service; some students for whom that is not a familiar concept?; I’ve never heard of it before; too much prior knowledge or familiarity?
With respect to the first sub criterion “topic,” committee members did not select articles that presented unfamiliar topics or articles that presupposed knowledge of current events or historical topics.

**Experience**

*Synonyms:* knowledge or experience of being in a class  
*Antonyms:* they just haven’t had that interaction with professors, so I’m not sure that they would understand; people who don’t have personal experience with pets would have trouble with this piece?; they don’t have any experiences; too much for them without discussion; not sure if it’s going to be suitable for students in a 110 without discussion; would require some discussion in class; it doesn’t make explicit the connection to their everyday lives, some students who are not yet experienced

According to the second sub criterion “experience,” committee members did not want to include articles that required students to possess college classroom experiences or to have discussions with professors to write the essay. The committee also did not want to include particular topics that only subsets of students might have, such as “having pets.”

**Speculation**

*Antonyms:* to speculate about things which they have no familiarity; speculate into the vapors that they have no knowledge of; it might be a bit of a stretch; can [they] anticipate the problems somebody might have in college at that point in their life?

With respect to the third sub criterion “speculation,” committee members did not want the absence of knowledge to cause students to have to speculate or conjecture about arguments. During a committee meeting, Gina (personal communication, January 25, 2006) noted that a particular article caused students to have to “speculate into the vapors” about arguments. With respect to this article, which the committee rejected, Gina also remarked, that students might have “to speculate about things which they have no familiarity.”

**Unhindered Response**

*Synonyms:* not to incriminate themselves; shy away from a topic that is going to force them to recycle the ideas that they’ve heard from other places rather than formulate their own ideas  
*Antonyms:* too emotionally charged; get off on a rant about this program or that program and not really go into an argument; they get kind of defensive; they might just answer yes; opens up a Pandora’s box; don’t have a lot of new original ideas on this topic; it’s too close to tempting them or making them feel like they have to get into issues that might be personal to them; they might incriminate themselves; asking about a potentially dark side of their lives

The fourth criterion was “unhindered response.” According to this criterion, some committee members wanted to avoid articles that might lead students to produce passionate “rants,” articles that might limit students’ ability to be original, articles that might encourage students to admit to embarrassing or possibly illegal activities, articles that might lead students to produce “yes, I agree,” or “no, I disagree” arguments in response to prompts; articles that would encourage
students to get off topic or go off on tangents; articles that would encourage students to reuse tired ideas; and articles that would present a topic that might be too leading.

Subject

**Synonyms:** appeal to a wide range of testers; the topic was really interesting; students coming in would be that interested; a lot of girls would relate to it; catch their attention: all of our students would be interested in this; really cool [for students]

**Antonyms:** I wondered if anyone would be interested in this topic; not sure they would be interested in it; not everybody would be equally interested in it; I don’t know if it would have the stand and interest across the group we’re looking at; I’m not sure some high school students would care so much; not part of their interest; engaging for parents of younger children but not necessarily for students; it would alienate a lot of the guys; they might be offended a little bit; I wasn’t sure how much it would interest our whole population

The fifth criterion was “subject.” Committee members wanted to use articles that the widest range of students would be interested in, articles that students could relate to personally, articles that had relevance to students’ lives, articles that targeted students as its primary audience, and articles that would not offend students. According to the official definition of this criterion, the article must be “interesting to a wide range of students,” and “it must appeal equally to each of the approximately 4,000 students who will write placement essays” (see “Appendix F: Finding Articles and Writing Prompts,” p. 661). Gina (personal communication, January 25, 2006) explained that the article must be of interest to “any dichotomous set up you can—male/female, affluent/low income, [and] urban/suburban.” Committee members wanted articles that would be of interest and appeal to all students within the entire course range of students taking the test.

Exemplar

**Synonyms:** models of the type of writing that we value in academe; good size paragraphs

**Antonyms:** journalistic paragraphs; it gets really kind of aggressive; it’s informative; a how-too feel to it; overly intimate; students….think that this is the position that we are taking on it; students comparing serious issues to American Idol; giving students the wrong message; good for an informational essay about a book; choppiness of the piece

The sixth criterion was “exemplar.” According to this criterion, committee members valued essays that were good curricular and/or academic models for students to imitate. In other words, essays seen to parallel course assignments were valued. For instance, committee members spoke negatively of articles with short, choppy “journalistic paragraphs”; articles that were overly “informative” or “how-to” oriented rather than persuasive; articles that posed inappropriate, nonacademic, and/or informal “false analogies”; articles that had an overly argumentative “tone” or seemed to aggressively advocate a particular policy; and articles that presented positions that students might perceive as GSW or university policy. Gina (personal communication, February 9, 2006) remarked, “These things are supposed to be models of the type of writing that we value in academe.” Likewise, Olivia (personal communication, February 23, 2006) explained that articles should represent an “exemplar of the kind of thing that we’re going for.” Marlow (personal communication, March 2, 2006), a committee member, concurred and explained that
“the arguments [in the article] resemble writing students will use in the classroom.” Gina (personal communication, February 14, 2006) also pointed out that a placement essay “would also have to address the exemplars of argument, of persuasion, to be placed highly.”

**Sophistication**

**Synonyms:** tells you something about their level of complexity; points out the difference between 111 and 112 in most cases; the level of argument a student can muster; if they are so inclined to use this to pull in things from here that 112 students; I don’t think the article would be too much for a 110 student to read and understand; more accessible to students; the more advanced writers might take a little bit more sophisticated approach to it; somebody who has an understanding of persuasion but not very sophisticated; an info dump, a purely narrative or just informational piece; I’m not sure if it’s going to be suitable for students in a 110 without discussion; a more sophisticated [reading] which will kind of reveal some of the nuances of that

**Antonyms:** the less advanced writers might just regurgitate things they’ve heard before; an info dump, a purely narrative or just informational piece is something that…hurts their placement; their level of sophistication with how things like that work could be problematic; a less sophisticated read is going to yield more towards a pro-technology side

The seventh criterion was “sophistication.” According to this criterion, committee members wanted articles that would reveal the “sophistication” of students’ responses within the entire range of students’ writing abilities—from beginning to advanced skill levels; the more complex the response to the article, the higher the response would be placed. For example, articles that are too difficult would impede less proficient students and prevent them from putting forth their best efforts. Anticipating what students might write in response to an article, Gina (personal communication, February 14, 2006) explained that the level of sophistication is an important placement indicator within the GSW curriculum: “Are we looking at somebody who has an understanding of persuasion but not very sophisticated?”

**Audience**

**Synonyms:** they [students] probably could still relate; this is accessible to everybody; happy to see it finally move into teenagers; the title is directed towards students; appeal to the high school crowd coming in

**Antonyms:** tone comes off a little condescending to students; in this day and age of PC [political correctness] terminology that you would refer to someone as “the poor student”; Some of these articles are geared almost toward parents; it’s very much about corporate America; primary audience would be people in a company; the key audience would be educators; the audience is us [teachers]; focus mostly on younger kids, like around the five to nine; the essay is directed towards fellow professors; its written to a very specific audience; it’s not something that’s addressed to them

The eighth criterion was “audience.” Committee members looked for articles that included traditional and nontraditional students as a primary audience--articles that would be accessible to the entire range of students writing placement essays. They were concerned that if the primary audience of the piece of article focused on other groups’ (e.g. corporate audiences) interests or
had a condescending tone towards students, students may have difficulty understanding and/or relating to the subject, and consequently, have difficulty supporting positions in their essays.

**Relevance**

*Synonyms:* the article itself kind of opens those doors instead of going all in one direction; focus on that element [main idea]  
*Antonyms:* the article is about obesity and some students will just write about obesity regardless of how you phrase that [prompt]; if the article leads so strongly in one direction, I get uncomfortable

The ninth criterion was “relevance.” According to this criterion, committee members wanted articles’ theses or main ideas to coincide with their own ideas for writing future persuasive prompts; they were concerned that articles might lead students to particular topics regardless of how members write the prompts. As a result, if the main idea(s) of the article did not coincide with the committee’s main ideas for prompts, the article was considered unviable.

**Length**

The tenth criterion was length, and two sub criteria emerged—“word count” and “density of content.”

**Word Count**

*Synonyms:* the shortest one we used last year was 1000 words, the longest was 1700; okay with the length; full-text word count is 741  
*Antonyms:* it’s getting up there in length; it’s very long; it might be too short; it’s too short; a little on the short side

With regard to the sub criterion “word count,” committee members looked for articles that were between 1000 and 1700 words.

**Density of Content**

*Synonyms:* it has content; the density of the content; we could use part of it  
*Antonyms:* there’s not enough there; it’s one paragraph

With regard to the sub criterion “density of content,” committee members looked for articles that contained enough “content” for students to produce persuasive responses.

**Currency**

*Synonyms:* these are recent articles too; so the topic is timely?; it’s about tech addicts from 2003; again, 2003  
*Antonyms:* it is dated; if you look at the date, it was 12/11/95

The eleventh criterion was “currency.” Committee members were concerned that students would not be able to understand and/or apply the article’s position and/or argument because the topic was not current, and consequently, unfamiliar.
In writing prompts for the placement test, “strategy” was the most frequently invoked constellation for writing prompts. All of the official criteria, as well as any additional criteria, comprised this constellation. Like “appropriateness,” the constellation “strategy” involved all of the official and unofficial criteria and was the main constellation for this stage of the test design. (The other theme “placement test” is in a separate constellation because it refers to the culmination of the two stages of the test design process and the technical aspects of writing prompts for the test.) According to “Appendix F: Finding Articles and Writing Prompts,” p. 661, “strategy” refers to a writing prompt that helps students “effectively utilize an English 110/111/112 rhetorical strategy.” In other words, students must employ a rhetorical strategy based upon the GSW curriculum. During a follow-up interview, Gina (personal communication, April 12, 2006) explained that “strategy” was an important priority, for the Placement Prompt Committee wanted there to be “some ‘strategy’ suggested in the prompt so that the student could generate a persuasive argument”; this rhetorical “strategy” should be one that students within the GSW curriculum are familiar.

### Strategy Constellation

Within the constellation “strategy,” the criteria (in order of approximate frequency) were “curriculum,” “amount of information,” “clarity,” “prior knowledge,” “unhindered response,” “subject,” “relevance,” and “use of quotations.”

### Curriculum

**Synonyms:** I like the idea of opening it up for solutions; I wanted to get the word “causes” over there, but it’s clunky; speculates about the possible causes; I really wanted to write an arguing a position prompt, a speculating about causes prompt, and a proposing a solution prompt; in that, I thought you could make that a proposing a solution; change this from a position—questions seems to make itself a position—to a solutions type of an essay question; opening it up for solutions; what other solutions can we create?; Are we going to change that one and make it a solution?; we can open up three to a solutions kind of prompt; gives causes, solutions

**Antonyms:** doesn’t propose solutions where that one did; it would only work in the speculating about causes, if they can’t manage a solutions type of essay, at least something that argues a position

The first criterion was “curriculum.” According to the criterion “curriculum,” placement prompt committee members decided what kind of specific English 110/111/112 rhetorical strategy or assignment to use in a prompt. For instance, prompt strategies fell into three major categories—the “arguing a position prompt,” the “speculating about causes prompt,” and the “proposing a solution prompt”—three major assignments in GSW courses. Gina (personal communication, April 12, 2006) explained that committee members should phrase prompts so that students understand that they are to write a “persuasive piece,” or more specifically, “strategies that we use in our curriculum, such as speculating about causes or proposing solutions” essay assignments. Likewise, Marlow (personal communication, April 6, 2006) explained that he wanted prompts that would “encourage students to write essays similar in nature to the ones we teach in class, proposing a solution, speculating about causes, etcetera.” Committee members discussed this criterion to explain to one another how they wrote prompts to parallel one or more
of the major assignments or to help one another revise prompts to conform to one of these assignments. In particular, members discussed how they could employ a different strategy or assignment in each of the three prompts (see “Appendix D: 2006 Online Placement Test,” pp. 656-657. Each prompt employs one of these rhetorical strategies.)

**Amount of Information**

*Synonyms:* if we could loosen it just a little bit and say; I like the idea of making it a little bit broader; What if we added in another question?; opens it up a lot; Something more general like that; that was broad enough to bring a lot of people in; how much should I give them [students]?; general in a sense; narrow it down; I don’t want to lead them; it’s wide open; propose solutions that will cover everybody; I didn’t think they were too long

*Antonyms:* not to narrow it to new college students; I wondered if it was too long—if it had too much information; I kind of noticed that, that I was repetitive; avoid making it about technology, which is like a side issue; that is kind of broad; too tight to do it that soon; I kind of noticed that, that I was repetitive, that I would ask a question, then state the question, then state it again; I was so repetitive

The second criterion was “amount of information.” According to “Appendix F: Finding Articles and Writing Prompts,” p. 661, prompts should not “give too much information” or “too little information to the students” with regard to this criterion. Gina (personal communication, April 12, 2006) pointed out that the “amount of information” was discussed frequently in committee meetings because committee members must “really glean the essential bits and leave all the extrapolations and other things out.” Gina did not want “to engender more thought on students’ part like a classroom prompt.” Larissa (personal communication, April 13, 2006) explained that “amount of information” pertained to long prompts, which “gave too much information” and “were kind of leading the students into writing a certain position on a certain issue.” In discussing one of her prompts with the committee, Larissa (personal communication, April 13, 2006) said that she wanted the prompt to be “general” whereas the other committee members asked her to “narrow” the prompt’s scope. Overall, committee members were concerned that the prompts should be either focused or general enough to help students employ one of the English 110/111/112 rhetorical strategies. Members were concerned that the prompt’s intended audience was too focused or general; more generally, members did not want prompts to be too leading or compel students to write on certain topics. On the other hand, members did not want to give too little information in the prompts. Finally, committee members worked to either make prompts less repetitive or elaborated and added information to clarify the writing prompts.

**Clarity**

*Synonyms:* get only one strategy going in that prompt; split off a new prompt from it; we need to put something in there for what’s small; “should they” is more like it; I had a few concerns with how they [prompts] were worded; we need to put something in there for what’s “small”

*Antonyms:* it’s going to send them in four different directions; I wonder if that would be confusing for students—that you can agree with some of them or all of the positions; if they don’t believe that there should be a solution, it then switches into a different type of article, saying, so it’s an argument; is that something we want to do, where it’s going to
put up two different types of essays? one side proposes a solution and the other side is arguing a position; speculated about causes and asked for an argument; this almost requires them to answer both one and two

The third criterion was “clarity.” According to “Appendix F: Finding Articles and Writing Prompts,” p. 661, “clarity” meant that “students clearly understand what they are being asked to do.” Gina (personal communication, April 12, 2006) pointed out that “clarity” means “students need to know what to do” on the placement test. Using this criterion, committee members wanted to be sure that each prompt clearly presented only one English 110/111/112 rhetorical strategy. Some committee members wrote prompts that contained more than one curricular strategy; therefore, members revised these prompts for the final placement test. Gina (personal communication, April 12, 2006) explained that asking students to complete more than one curricular assignment “fractures the students’ focus on the strategy” and “may harm the student’s caliber of response.” Consequently, she said that the prompt “should ask them [students] to do only one thing.” Clarity also involved selecting clearer vocabulary and rephrasing passages.

**Prior Knowledge**

**Synonyms:** most of the things about budgeting your money are kind of commonsensical

**Antonyms:** they might not have any experience; I wonder, especially coming from high school whether or not there had been that much exposure to art; if they don't know what street art is, they won't know how to answer it; somebody from a rural background who hasn't had much exposure to graffiti or city life; I wonder if students would completely have the knowledge to back that up

The fourth criterion was “prior knowledge”; committee members did not want students’ lack of prior knowledge or experience concerning the topic being discussed in prompts to prevent them from writing persuasive responses. In other words, committee members wanted students to be able to respond persuasively to the prompts without prior knowledge of topics invoked by the prompts. Marlow (personal communication, April 6, 2006) said that the committee’s “biggest concern was writing a prompt that the students would be able to understand.”

**Unhindered Response**

**Antonyms:** I thought they might have limited options; I could see everybody just saying “yes,” and then there goes the essay; I just don't know how much of an essay you can go about

The fifth criterion was “unhindered response.” According to “unhindered response,” committee members discussed how prompts might lead students to produce “yes, I agree” or “no, I disagree” arguments or how prompts might elicit little content from students.

**Subject**

**Synonyms:** that’s another area that could draw in a lot of people; raises an interesting question; a lot of interesting things you could get at; might help draw more people into that; this would be a way to snag some people that people that would be resistant to this kind of stuff
Antonyms: I don’t think students are going to care; I just don’t know if they’re really going to be interested in those kinds of questions; I wonder if this is something everybody would be interested in; students might not be so into

The sixth criterion was “subject.” According to this criterion, committee members wanted prompts to be interesting and engaging for students; they wanted the prompts to elicit as much interest as possible. Larissa (personal communication, April 13, 2006) explained that in writing her prompts, she wanted students to feel like they could write about the prompt’s topic: “I wanted to keep the writing style of the prompt itself interesting...and lead the student into thinking, ‘I have something to say about this subject.’”

Relevance

Synonyms: if you focus on that element [from the article], you might be able to get away with it
Antonyms: are we asking them to answer a question the article contends they can’t?; the article is about obesity and some students will just write about obesity regardless of how you phrase that

The seventh criterion was “relevance.” According to “Appendix F: Finding Articles and Writing Prompts,” p. 661, prompts should “relate well to the spirit of, or the main idea of, the article” with respect to “relevance.” In other words, committee members wanted each writing prompt to connect to the main idea of the chosen article. With respect to this criterion, committee members did not want prompts to go in one direction and the article another. Overall, Larissa (personal communication, April 13, 2006) believed that “all prompts did relate well to the spirit of the articles.” However, in one particular instance, the committee decided not to use an article and the accompanying prompts because the author wanted students to focus on a particular aspect of a topic, but the article seemed to strongly encourage students to write on topics that the author did not want students to address.

Use of Quotations

Antonyms: I think they’re going to look at that quote and have no clue; the second too, I thought were above 110 students

The ninth (and most seldom mentioned) criterion was the “use of quotations.” According to “Appendix F: Finding Articles and Writing Prompts,” p. 661, quotations should be “appropriate and helpful in clarifying the prompt” and not “muddy the waters.” Gina (personal communication, April 12, 2006) remarked that with regard to one writing prompt, “the quotations were just beyond the comprehension of a 110 student.” Therefore, quotations included in prompts must be accessible to all students within the program’s course range.

Placement Test Constellation

Synonyms: it’s asking them to make an argument; most of them make explicit reference to the article; some kind of quote; prompting them, or pointing them in a particular direction of thinking, not that particular stance, but a particular subset of the topic, so kind of a focusing statement; it might ask a question; admonition to do use examples
Another constellation was “Placement Test.” Because this constellation dealt specifically with how committee members constructed the writing prompts, this is a separate constellation in “Figure 4: Dynamic Criteria Map for Finding Articles and Writing Prompts” (p. 245). The committee studied prompts from the 2005 online writing placement test, and Gina (personal communication, February 14, 2006) directed a discussion about the approaches used in writing these prompts. First, in order to contextualize the task, the prompts must reflect an argumentative GSW “strategy,” such as the “position” or “speculating about causes” rhetorical strategies previously discussed. Second, prompts should include one or more quotes from the article and an initial question to help students think about the topic. Then the question should be followed by a focusing statement, which narrows the topic. The focusing statement is followed by the assignment, “Write an essay…” Finally, the prompt should end with an admonition to encourage students to support their essays with examples from personal experience or readings.

Interrelationships among Criteria and Constellations in “Figure 4: Dynamic Criteria Map for Finding Articles and Writing Prompts”

With regard the 2006 Placement Prompt Committee Participants, the concept of constructivist content validity—the relationship between the GSW Placement Program’s communal writing assessment (CWA) practices and the GSW curriculum—emerged from the analyses of these two stages of the test design. The pilot study results foreground the importance of constructivist content validity with respect to the interrelationships among constellations, criteria, and sub criteria from the “Finding Articles” and “Writing Prompts” stages of the online writing placement test design. The Placement Prompt Committee created a task that reflected the GSW curriculum. Moreover, this task identified the purpose of the placement model; the main purpose of the 2006 online writing placement test was to help students produce their best persuasive pieces of writing. The Placement Prompt Committee designed this placement test to give all students equal opportunity to produce their best persuasive essays, which would then be judged against a GSW curriculum that emphasizes persuasive writing.

“Figure 4: Dynamic Criteria Map for Finding Articles and Writing Prompts” (p. 245)—comprised of the constellations “appropriateness,” “strategy,” and “placement test” and the supporting criteria and sub criteria—emphasize the significance of selecting articles and writing accompanying prompts for the online writing placement test, a test that would facilitate the writing of persuasive or argumentative samples from students—samples that placement evaluators would then assess with respect to the GSW curriculum. Gina (personal communication, February 14, 2006) explained that the placement task should be accessible to all students so that they can “do as strong or as weak a job as they’re capable” within the curriculum. She argued that “the underlying question of placement” is simply the following: “Can they [the students] write a persuasive piece?” Because the results stress the connection between assessment and curriculum, constructivist content validity is of central importance to the effectiveness of the GSW placement model.

“Appropriateness” and “Strategy” as Complimentary Constellations

As mentioned earlier, the official “Finding Articles and Writing Prompts” criteria list gave equal weight to the criteria “subject,” “readability,” “prior knowledge,” “appropriateness,” and “length” regarding article selection. Concerning prompt writing, the official list gave equal weight to the criteria “clarity,” “relevance,” “amount of information,” “use of quotations,” and
“strategy” (see “Appendix F: Finding Articles and Writing Prompts,” p. 661). However, the committee members used these criteria dynamically. The constellation “appropriateness” involved eleven criteria: “persuasive prompt,” “readability,” “prior knowledge,” “subject,” “unhindered response,” “exemplar,” “sophistication,” “relevance,” “audience,” “length,” and “currency.” The constellation “strategy” involved eight criteria: “curriculum,” “amount of information,” “clarity,” “prior knowledge,” “unhindered response,” “subject,” “relevance,” and “use of quotations.”

The constellations “appropriateness” and “strategy” and corresponding hierarchy of criteria foreground the importance of choosing articles and writing prompts that would help students write persuasive essays—essays that placement evaluators could then judge against the GSW curriculum. In a sense, the committee members treated the “appropriateness” and “strategy” constellations as two sides of the same curricular coin. While each constellation focused on two separate sides or stages of the placement design process, both constellations complimented one another and were essential in the design of the final version of the “placement test” constellation—a test that included both articles and prompts that would help students produce essays relevant to the GSW curriculum. Furthermore, all of the criteria and sub criteria of “appropriateness” and “strategy” elaborated on how the Placement Prompt Committee produced such a test.

For instance, the constellation “appropriateness” referred to how the article should elicit the kind of placement responses the committee wanted from students, a response grounded in argumentation. Therefore, to facilitate this goal, committee members chose articles that would draw out specific, curricular persuasive responses (criterion “persuasive response”); would present clear language, ideas, and graphics to all test takers (criterion “readability”), would provide familiar topics (criterion “prior knowledge”), would facilitate students’ persuasive responses (criterion “unhindered response”), would be interesting to the widest range of students (criterion “subject”), would serve as curricular exemplars and academic models of writing (criterion “exemplar”), would make known the entire range of students’ writing abilities (criterion “sophistication”), would involve traditional and nontraditional students as primary audiences (criterion “audience”), would coincide with persuasive prompt ideas (criterion “relevance”), would provide adequate content (criterion “length”), and would present current and familiar topics (criterion “currency”).

On the other side of the curricular coin, the constellation “strategy” referred to how the writing prompts should encourage students to employ an English 110/111/112 rhetorical strategy in their responses. Therefore, to facilitate this goal, committee members wrote prompts that would draw out a specific GSW assignment (criterion “curriculum”), that would provide students with just enough information to help them employ one of the English 110/111/112 rhetorical strategies (criterion “amount of information”), that would clearly invoke a single English 110/111/112 rhetorical strategy (criterion “clarity”), that would not provide unfamiliar topics which would impede students from writing persuasively (criterion “prior knowledge”), that would facilitate students’ responses (criterion “unhindered response”), that would interest and engage the students (criterion “subject”), that would coincide with the main ideas of the article (criterion “relevance”), and that would include quotations which would help students write responses (criterion “use of quotations”).
Interrelationships Among Constellations’ Criteria and Sub Criteria
There are many interrelationships among the criteria and sub criteria of the constellations “appropriateness” and “strategy”; these interrelationships further emphasize the importance of the curriculum in the placement model. Because the finding articles stage of placement test design preceded the writing prompts stage, the criteria and sub criteria of the constellation “appropriateness” were extended into the criteria and sub criteria of the constellation “strategy” to support the “purpose of placement”—to help students produce their best persuasive essays within a curriculum based on argumentation. As mentioned earlier, the two constellations culminated in the constellation “placement test,” which is at the bottom center of the Dynamic Criteria Map, in which committee members used their knowledge of selecting articles and writing prompts to construct and structure the final prompts. Since each constellation/theme is included in “Figure 4: Dynamic Criteria Map for Finding Articles and Writing Prompts” (p. 245), refer to this map throughout the discussion. By synthesizing key criteria and sub criteria from the “appropriateness” and “strategy” constellations, the “purpose of placement” and the need for a focused constructivist content validity inquiry will become more apparent.

Criteria “Persuasive Response,” “Exemplar,” and “Curriculum”
The interrelationship among the criteria “persuasive response” and “exemplar” with “curriculum” foregrounds the committee’s commitment to create a writing placement test that elicits specific, persuasive essays. Committee members wanted their chosen articles to encourage each student to write a “persuasive response,” a response that paralleled assignments within the course sequence; and conversely, they rejected articles that would prevent students from writing non-persuasive essays outside of the curriculum. In addition, committee members sought and valued an article that was an “exemplar” of one of the GSW essay assignments, and consequently, criticized and often rejected articles written in nonacademic genres: for instance, members were critical of articles that were journalistic, overly informative, excessively argumentative, or informal because they anticipated that students would assume that such articles were curricular examples of good writing. Because committee members intended for students to be able to write a persuasive essay that paralleled a course assignment, they wanted to be sure that neither the articles nor prompts impeded a student’s ability to complete this placement task. Extending the criteria “persuasive response” and “exemplar” into the process of writing prompts, committee members wrote and revised writing prompts that paralleled three specific, major writing assignments—the “arguing a position,” “speculating about causes,” and “proposing a solution” persuasive essay assignments—with respect to the criterion “curriculum” in the constellation “strategy.”

Criterion “Unhindered Response”
In both selecting articles and writing prompts, committee members intended for articles and prompts to help students write persuasive pieces that placement evaluators could easily match to the GSW curriculum. In fact, committee members wanted students to produce an “unhindered response”; they did not want the articles to encourage one-dimensional, overly zealous, revealing, off-topic, or unoriginal essays, which would impede students from demonstrating their ability to write persuasively with respect to the GSW curriculum. In addition, just as committee members did not want the articles to encumber students’ ability to write an “unhindered response”: committee members wrote and revised prompts that would elicit an “unhindered response” rather than simple “yes” or “no” replies.
Criterion “Relevance”
Committee members wanted to be able to write prompts based directly upon main ideas in the articles; according to the criterion “relevance,” members wanted article topics to directly correlate with their ideas for writing prompts; they did not want an article’s main ideas to override the committee’s ability to draw out students’ best attempts at argumentation. “Relevance” was an important criterion for both the “appropriateness” and “strategy” constellations. Just as committee members wanted articles’ main ideas to be viable for writing prompts, the committee worked to ensure that the main ideas of their prompts paralleled the “spirit of” the articles’ main points.

Criteria “Readability” and “Clarity”
Committee members wanted all students to be able to comprehend the articles and prompts in order to be able to write their best persuasive responses. With respect to the criterion “readability” and the sub criteria “readability of language,” “readability of ideas,” and “readability of visuals,” committee members closely examined the accessibility of vocabulary (e.g., sub criterion “readability of language”) and concepts (e.g., sub criterion “readability of ideas”) to the entire range of students entering the course sequence; the committee was also concerned that some student would not understand concepts presented in the articles without photographs and/or graphics (e.g., sub criterion “readability of visuals”). Overall, the criterion “readability” is directly connected to the curriculum in that committee members deemed an article to be “readable” if a student in English 110, at the beginning of the GSW course sequence, would be able to understand the article’s vocabulary and concepts; otherwise, some students at the beginning of the course sequence would have difficulty using the article to write persuasive responses. Therefore, committee members looked for articles that possessed high “readability,” so all students could use the articles in writing persuasive responses. The criterion “readability” invoked the theme “clarity” under the constellation “strategy,” for committee members wanted to be sure that students clearly understood the one English 110/111/112 rhetorical strategy asked for in the prompt; in addition; members also wanted to be sure that writing prompts’ vocabulary and passages were clear and comprehensible for all students taking the placement test.

Criterion “Prior Knowledge”
Committee members did not want students’ lack of “prior knowledge” of topics presented in articles or writing prompts to impede their ability to write persuasively. According to “Appendix F: Finding Articles and Writing Prompts,” p. 661, “prior knowledge” requires that articles “can be fully understood without prior knowledge of the subject.” Committee members did not want articles which presupposed that student writers possessed knowledge of particular topics (sub criterion “topic”), articles which presupposed that student writers had particular classroom experiences (sub criterion “experience”), or articles that required student writers to have to “speculate” to write arguments because they possessed little or no knowledge of the topic(s) presented in the articles (sub criterion “speculation”). Committee members believed that the full range of students entering the course sequence must be familiar with the topic in order to produce their best persuasive responses with regard to the curriculum. Just as committee members were concerned that students’ lack of “prior knowledge” or familiarity with articles’ topics could weaken their placement responses, members also did not want writing prompts to include unfamiliar topics that would prevent students from understanding the specific persuasive
essay writing task. Members did not want students, most of whom are high school students, to rely upon knowledge that they might not yet possess.

**Criterion “Subject”**
According to the criteria “subject” for both “appropriateness” and “strategy,” committee members chose articles that would interest the approximately 4,000 students who would write persuasive responses for the 2006 online writing placement test; therefore, members preferred articles that were relevant and respectful to students. Larissa (personal communication, February 16, 2006) noted that articles should be relevant, engaging, and enjoyable for all students taking the placement test. Similarly, committee members wrote prompts that would interest, engage, and encourage students to produce persuasive responses.

**Criteria “Length” and “Amount of Information”**
Even though the criterion “length” was a fairly straightforward supporting theme of the constellation “appropriateness” (articles had to be between 1000 and 1700 words long) committee members felt that articles had to provide enough content to help students write persuasive responses. According to “Appendix F: Finding Articles and Writing Prompts,” p. 661, the article cannot be “too long,” “too short,” “too dense,” or “too sparse.” Committee members invoked this criterion in much more detail with respect to the criterion “amount of information” with regard to the constellation “strategy.” Members wanted prompts to contain information that would help students utilize one of the GSW curricular strategies. Echoing the committee’s concern with the density of article content, committee members noted that some prompts were too narrow or general; more specifically, the committee neither wanted writing prompts to compel students to focus on a narrow range of topics nor to provide so little information that the students would have little direction in writing their essays. Consequently, the committee strove to provide clear, essential information to students to assist them in writing focused, persuasive responses. The final writing prompts reflect these strategies.

**Constellation “The Placement Test”**
A separate yet important constellation was the “the placement test”; this theme focused on how committee members structured the test--the actual test design. Committee members’ work with respect to the constellations “appropriateness” and “strategy” contributed to the organization and content of the placement test; in other words, all of the committee’s efforts culminated in the final product--the online writing placement test. The test employs a GSW rhetorical strategy, includes “quotes” from the article, a “focusing statement” that centers on a particular topic, the argumentative prompt, and an admonition to include supporting examples and illustrations.
Figure 4: Dynamic Criteria Map for Finding Articles and Writing Prompts
Summary of 2005 Placement Participants’ Themes

Implicit Rhetorical Values

Summary of Theme: The theme “Implicit Rhetorical Values” refers to participants’ concerns that it would be challenging to uncover implicit rhetorical values. They pointed out that some participants in the study might say they value what they have been told to value. Given that normed values are explicit, there are many rhetorical values that are implicit and subconscious; these decisions are regularly employed but seldom if ever articulated. They explained that applying placement criteria appears to be a somewhat intuitive process relying on implicit, hidden, unspoken, and unarticulated assumption about what skills students should possess when entering a writing course.

Sample Direct Quotes

The things that we hold implicit we may not articulate because they are givens, and they are invisible; They are so naturalized we don’t even see them; So the questions will have to make us see what to us has become invisible. If I were to offer one suggestion, that would be it. Because those things—we know them—our experience has ingrained them so much in us that we just take it as a given and then go on; We do a lot of placement decisions we make subconsciously and it’s honestly hard to say how much; I wonder as a supporting research question if you would have people—because you’re having them articulate what kinds of rhetorical strategies or values are implicit in the placement—if at a different time you ask them what rhetorical values are implicit in the classroom; Easy placements are implicit or “internalized” or not fully articulated; I think you’d probably get better feedback from the hardest, so I think when it comes easily to us, we internalize it and go; More in the rhetorical vein, I remember during training asking people what they would consider the first thing they should look at in an essay. And they gave me a wide range of answers. And it startled me—to be honest with you—that no one said, “They should first look to see if what they are looking at is even an essay,” which to me would be the first thing I would look at. And I think that was probably implicit—it was understood—but it was never articulated.

Issue of Honesty

Summary of Theme: During the focus group interview, some participants were concerned that there would be challenges to uncovering the rhetorical and evaluative values of placement evaluators with respect to the “Issue of Honesty” theme. Some participants said that 2006 placement evaluators might value what they have been trained to value. During the group interview, Olivia (personal communication, March 16, 2006), a 2005 placement evaluator, explained, “[H]onesty and truth might not necessarily creep to the top because people might answer what they know and they’ve been trained to answer.” The “Issue of Honesty” theme presents a potential problem in uncovering implicit rhetorical values: Will placement evaluators be honest in explaining what rhetorical values they use in assessment?

Sample Direct Quotes

So I guess honesty and truth might not necessarily creep to the top, because people might answer what they know and they’ve been trained to answer; Maybe it’s an honesty issue. I don’t know. It’s a difficult question. I think it’s a difficult thing to get at in placement to go back to placement. How do we address this?
Effect of Evaluation on Teaching

**Summary of Theme:** The theme “Effect of Evaluation” on Placement refers to how participants recognized that the wide range of students’ writing abilities within the placement categories paralleled skill levels within the classes.

**Direct Quotes**
I think seeing the huge range of abilities that popped up on placement essays really changed kind of how I teach, I think. I was really surprised to see how weak the weakest essays were, and when I taught English 110 in the fall, I think I had that in mind as I approached teaching all the different forms of essays...And I’ve kind of have it in mind where the weakest starting point is for my students in 110, and I think take them, go through a more step-by-step method in every essay, breaking down paragraphs to the minute detail so they know exactly what I’m looking for; I worked on placement for a lot of years at the institution and elsewhere, and it really has affected my teaching practices because it keeps me mindful of the wide range of students that appear in any class...I have to do something that can reach the entire range in involving a higher range of students, not just my stereotypical student and things like that. It’s given me a sense of the range within each placement category, which in this case, is each class; I know that those students who are placed in 110 have more deficiencies in syntax and sentence structure, so I decided to focus less on that in that 111 because I realized how evaluators judge the essay; Therefore, for my first time, when I taught in America, I think I overestimated my American students...So I think that if next time I have the opportunity to tech American students, my focus would change. I would like to focus more on structure and organization; So I think placement is good for kind of being a benchmark…situating you and letting you know where kids are starting from. And I guess I saw some common problems/common issues

Crucial Evaluative Decisions

**Summary of Theme:** The theme “Crucial Evaluative Decisions” refers to the issues 2005 Placement Evaluators perceived as the most crucial factors involved in evaluative decisions, such as placing borderline essays and how to match students’ skill levels to the placement category range, and prioritizing evaluative criteria with respect to placements that define the placement and course boundaries.

**Sample Direct Quotes**
Do you look at just grammar for 110 or do you look at global issues, and I think global issues are more important?; Where do you draw the line [between placement categories]?; It’s that 110/111 distinction, which really goes at the heart; Do they go into 111 or 110?; After that, I do look at grammar and if it’s all over the place and there are tons of grammar it’s a 110; How will identifying a fuller range of readers’ rhetorical values more clearly define the curricular boundaries between courses within the sequence?

Effect of Disagreement on Evaluation

**Summary of Theme:** The theme “Effect of Disagreement on Evaluation” refers to how participants perceived that disagreements with their partners influenced final placement decisions.
Direct Quotes
The only things we really disagreed on, that where we had bad disagreements, was placing people in 110; I think we actually compromised okay if we really couldn’t agree; And it would usually be something like a 111/112. It was never like, “Should this be a 110 placement or a 112?” It was always the finer distinctions, but we agreed most of the time, which was interesting because we’ve got different backgrounds.

Evaluators’ Initial Concerns
Summary of Theme: The theme “Evaluators’ Initial Concerns” refers to how placement evaluators may respond to fear, nervousness, various worries, exit assessment expectations, and other concerns when they begin assessing essays early in the Placement Program.

Sample Direct Quotes
To see those essays [110 essays] for the first time maybe that can be surprising; I think that in the training session, my concern would be, Do my criteria really match the criteria of Gina initially? Because sometimes I just wanted to make sure that I was on the right track. So my concern was, Was I doing everything correctly?; Because you go through the norming and you are very conscientious, especially at the beginning, of all the criteria that you’ve been normed at; That’s why I asked because I have had people ask me, “Can I use a rubric?” And I’m thinking, “The mindset is here so we’ve got to get the mindset over to here”; From my perspective, one of the concerns is that new readers have a tendency to want to straddle a class. They’ll say, “I’ll place it in high 110, low 111”; I’m looking at skillful instructors who, for one reason or another, have some things at the forefront of their minds and some things back, I guess I need to not assume what’s in the front of their minds and what’s back and really talk about placement from a variety of approaches; I think it’s really good to get at what criteria are most important to them because you’ll also find out whether they’re misled by papers that are extremely error driven and taking that as their primary placement criterion and things like that; When I first started, I was very much concerned about being every reader. I was trying to imitate every other reader.

Evaluators’ Later Concerns
Summary of Theme: The theme “Evaluators’ Later Concerns” refers to the concerns evaluators may have later in the Placement Program, such as maintaining reliable, consistent, standard placement practices.

Sample Direct Quotes
What is the range I’m going to see? And then you can start looking at the rhetorical concerns and things you were talking about instead of being overwhelmed by that initial stuff; I think I got better idea of what the criteria were, and then I just want to make sure that everything I do...how can I put that...I would like to make sure I was not that rigid; I felt really bored, and sometimes real shocked with their interests. Because their interests do not really look like they are really ambitious or whatsoever because sometimes I think that their ideas are a little bit shallow. Their interests are so narrow; Do I really grade the students fairly? Am I too flexible with them because of the repetition or redundancy?; As time goes by, not only do your old fetishes creep in but you have certain criteria that you privilege because you have been seeing them so often and that as the placement goes on you might be more apt to lose sight of these criteria because you don’t see them as often; You might be a little bit unfair too after a while; You can drift which is
why you got the pairs and why you got to do it periodically. You got to keep coming back together; I am sensitive to the boredom thing because that is when you’ll begin to see drift; And then when you shift, halfway through your criteria does change; It’s kind of liberating actually as a teacher because you can look for possibility; Later on, you’re answering the question that we were talking about, “Does this work? To what extent does this work?”

**Effect of Idiosyncrasies on Evaluation**

**Summary of Theme:** The theme “Effect of Idiosyncrasies on Evaluation” refers to how placement evaluators’ idiosyncratic evaluative tendencies may influence placement decisions.

**Sample Direct Quotes**

I think, in terms of the essay itself, the thing that really stood out last year for me was how students shared very similar interests, and also their interests, to some extent, really surprised me because I’m from another culture; We’re all trained to look for the same criteria in placement essays before we even begin placing essays, so hopefully the evaluators will have the same criteria in mind; It would be interesting to see how they would vary per person and how they might vary throughout the course of reading; But, yeah, you can address people not get fixed on idiosyncratic kinds of things. But we all do bring our differences to the table, but research shows that if you train people well you’ll get a normed group and you can get pretty good reliance, pretty good reliability; I think we were also kind of trained to use criteria and to look for certain things in an essay and to say if it has these qualities it probably is a 110 essay or if it has these qualities it’s probably a 112 essay. I mean, as far as strategy goes I think looking at criteria in determining what you’re looking for, so that you can just say, “It feels like a 111 essay.” You can say, well the organization looks like this, the grammar looks like this, and audience awareness fills these qualities. So I think that that was our biggest strategy.

**Effect of Norming**

**Summary of Theme:** The theme “Effect of Norming on Evaluation” refers to how placement training and norming may influence evaluators’ placement decisions.

**Sample Direct Quotes**

Like is this an essay or those weird case scenarios that we talked about? So I think it really does affect even just your preparation going into it because you’re really more prepared for those strange situations when they come up; There’s a whole norming process; it’s so constructed to be a norming process but you can’t get away from peoples’ own hopes, desires, or own fetishes; Gina did a good job of being very clear about what the criteria were; There’s some things we might not have thought of if we didn’t had the training. Like is this an essay or those weird case scenarios that we talked about. So I think it really does affect even just your preparation going into it because you’re really more prepared for those strange situations when they come up; The comfort level, too, is really important. Because when we would do the practice ones together, we all kind of sat there really quiet at the beginning. No one wanted to volunteer their placement because they might be wrong. But you found the longer you went obviously you were pretty much in line with everybody, and that really made you feel a little better when you went into doing it on your own; And I think I really like the criteria. They are very clear and really helped me a lot; And I think the portfolio training forces you to read holistically. Put the pen down. And so that helped me as a placement reader; So very early on when we’re doing the practice stuff
and people are talking and things like that…a predominance of the shock value is articulated; They need to place into a course, and they can do high and low within the course, and then they can discuss it with somebody else, but they need to be able, and they have to give practice to be able to place into a course

**Effect of Pairing on Evaluation**

**Summary of Theme:** The Theme “Effect of Pairing on Evaluation” highlighted how the evaluative dynamic between evaluators influences consensus necessary for placement decisions.

**Sample Direct Quotes**

I think that’s [effect of pairing] a big issue. Sometimes good, and I think like you were saying it kind of forces you to articulate why it feels like an essay, which is nice. I mean, otherwise, you don’t really feel as confident I guess in your placement. But sometimes talking it through with…my partner, I was like oh yeah you’re right or I would change his mind; I think personality could be an issue. I was lucky. I worked really well with my partner. He was great, but, yeah, if you get people who are pretty unflexible or not willing to communicate really well that would be tough; You can’t put a very strong personality with someone who doesn’t have a strong personality because you know the strong personality is going to roll through the evaluation. It’s really tricky because you can’t ask someone; You can drift which is why you got the pairs and why you got to do it [norming] periodically, you got to keep coming back together; And then it’s nice, even if we’re really different, it is really nice to have that conversation talking about…why did we place this person in this category but you placed her in this other category? So that argument. And that discussion. That actually is really helpful rather than just doing it by myself; I still feel bad when I disagree with my reader about the 110. I think we actually compromised okay if we really couldn’t agree; In a way, when I was doing placement, because I had already been a placement reader, I kind of took on this role as a guide like showing my placement reader the ropes, so to speak, and I don’t know if that was positive or negative; But if I have a pair, if I have a partner to evaluate the same essay with me, I would be sometimes, maybe reaffirmed that I’m doing everything the right way. I’m really not so far away from the score or grade that the students really deserve. So in that sense, I really prefer working in pairs; Because I was so rhet/comp heavy, and he’s a poet, so sometimes we would disagree, like language, fluency, or beauty might sway one of us more than another. I was kind of hard core on organization; I guess I was curious how those partners were determined and whether or not that made a difference on the experience for some people, who maybe didn’t have a positive experience with a partner

**Effect of Other Influences on Paired Evaluation**

**Summary of Theme:** The theme “Effect of Other Influences on Paired Evaluation” refers to how miscellaneous factors, such as the speed at which evaluators placed essays, influenced pair evaluation.

**Sample Direct Quotes**

Well, there still is a subset of students out there who don’t take it [online writing placement test] seriously; You see something that’s well written, but it’s a paragraph, and you’re like, “Oh, you could have done better”; It almost seems like some students didn’t take it as seriously. You would read essays that were just like, they were dashed off in 10 minutes and uploaded; And it
just seems like if you’re placed in a room and you have to take this test, you would have a
different mindset than if you’re at home, and you have to upload a writing sample, and so my
concern was different than the first concern; But sometimes if I worked in pairs my major
concern would be whether I was efficient or not because sometimes I read slower.

**Evaluators’ General Strategies**

**Summary of Theme:** The theme “Evaluators’ General Strategies” refers to how the participants,
as placement evaluators, prioritized their evaluative tendencies with regard to high-order and
low-order concerns into a hierarchy of evaluative concerns.

**Sample Direct Quotes**

There’s that constant reminder that [EGS] you have to look at the whole thing; I always felt like
110 was a safer choice. You [Loretta] were talking about 110 the riskiest decision. But in some
cases I felt more safer putting a student in 110 than 112 because you said [Elaine] you’ve gotten
students and tested into 112 and said “How did you get here?”; I think for me it goes back to
what Gina says—Is this an essay? That’s really what I look at. Is this rhetorically an essay? Does
it have a controlling idea? Is this person really defending a position? Is there support going
on?...After that, I do look at grammar and if it’s all over the place and there are tons of grammar
it’s a 110; I moved from the grady rubric kind of world; We base [the placement decision] on
what we see in front of our face, not what we speculate might be the case; But I think
consciously I try to rely on the criteria given in the norming session first; We’re looking for a
thesis-driven argumentative essay; I think as comp teachers, we try to imagine too much into the
readings. We would see all this potential. “And if I had this student, I would do this, this, this.
You know. With one more draft, they could have done this. They’re writing for 112.” So I think
sometimes there’s that danger of bringing too much as a reader to the test and trying to push the
kids on maybe a little farther or expecting them to be farther than they are; It’s not on the rubric
the cohesion, coherent thing, but that’s kind of one of the things I looked for, but a sense of
structure, sense of argumentative structure, and cohesion/coherence are the two primary things
that I look for; I’m very picky about topic sentences...those little cues to the reader can make it
crystal clear; I would say can they [students’ essays]...have a position, and develop that position
throughout; I thought the most important criterion, one is, of course, the overall structure, the
overall layout, and another is whether the author himself supports his major arguments very well
in the paper. And maybe another concern is about their grammar and mechanics.

**Effect of Placement Coordinators on Evaluation**

**Summary of Theme:** The theme “Effect of Placement Coordinators on Evaluation” refers to
how the Placement Coordinator, Assistant Placement Coordinator, and training and norming
sessions influence placement evaluators’ evaluative tendencies.

**Sample Direct Quotes**

It was actually a co-equal relationship with Gina in that sort of way. And I sort of deferred to her
when she felt strongly about a placement; From my perspective, one of the concerns is that new
readers have a tendency to want to straddle a class. They’ll say, “I’ll place it in high 110, low
111.” Something like this, and I understand that impulse, but it’s something you [placement
coordinator] have to help them [placement evaluators] get beyond pretty quickly; If you
[placement coordinator] don’t really monitor that and start pushing towards the edges and tell
people there are two other courses out there...If left to their own devices without much training, people would put everything in 111.

**Effect of Evaluation on Teaching**

**Summary of Theme:** The theme “Effect of Evaluation on Teaching” refers to how placement decisions affect, alter, revise, and enhance teaching practices, and how placement reading helps evaluators see the full range of real, rather than stereotypical, range of skill level.

I think seeing the huge range of abilities that popped up on placement essays really changed kind of how I teach, I think. I was really surprised to see how weak the weakest essays were, and when I taught English 110 in the fall, I think I had that in mind as I approached teaching all the different forms of essays...And I’ve kind of have it in mind where the weakest starting point is for my students in 110, and I think take them, go through a more step-by-step method in every essay, breaking down paragraphs to the minute detail so they know exactly what I’m looking for; I worked on placement for a lot of years at the institution and elsewhere, and it really has affected my teaching practices because it keeps me mindful of the wide range of students that appear in any class...I have to do something that can reach the entire range in involving a higher range of students, not just my stereotypical student and things like that. It’s given me a sense of the range within each placement category, which in this case, is each class; I know that those students who are placed in 110 have more deficiencies in syntax and sentence structure, so I decided to focus less on that in that 111 because I realized how evaluators to judge the essay; Therefore, for my first time, when I taught in America, I think I overestimated my American students...So I think that if next time I have the opportunity to tech American students, my focus would change. I would like to focus more on structure and organization; So I think placement is good for kind of being a benchmark…situating you and letting you know where kids are starting from. And I guess I saw some common problems/common issues

**Effect of Prior Knowledge of Students’ Performances**

**Summary of Theme:** The theme “Effect of Prior Knowledge of Students’ Performances” refers to how experiences teaching writing may influence evaluators’ placement decisions.

**Sample Direct Quotes**

I think as comp teachers, we try to imagine too much into the readings. We would see all this potential. “And if I had this student, I would do this, this, this. You know. With one more draft, they could have done this. They’re writing for 112”; And so if you’re foregrounding one set of things and your partner is foregrounding another set of things, you could come up with something different and then ideally, you’re talking to each other, you can rework the architecture of your criteria a little bit…so the things you weren’t paying much attention to you’ll pay more attention to and vice versa; It [placement evaluation] kind of gives you a interesting perspective or ethos in the classroom.

**Problematic Placements**

**Summary of Theme:** The theme “Problematic Placements” referred to essays that 2005 evaluators had difficulty placing, such as essays that could not be easily judged according to the curriculum, such as essays written in non-argumentative genres, essays written by nonnative and nonstandard speakers of English, and essays written off- prompt or off-topic.
Sample Direct Quotes

I think one of the most difficult things is the genre difference. So it’s...a student is coming at this from a more of a narrative perspective, but they write well...Their syntax, their writing, their word choice is sophisticated, but they’re not really writing an argumentative essay, an overtly argumentative essay; This is a tricky subject for placement but it’s important, and at least, I think, needs to be talked about more when you have students from different ethnic backgrounds, different class backgrounds who are writing with a certain kind of dialect. Okay. How do you place that?; My concern then was how to place students who did not address the prompt, and while the essay might have structure, good sentence structures, and focus, but if the prompt was not addressed, we had difficulty; One of the things I can recall was how to place the ESL essays, essays that were written by nonnative speakers. I thought that it’s an important issue that needs to be addressed; The most difficult thing for me is to place students who are on the borders. So sometimes the students, the overall structure of the paper might be fine, but they made a lot of grammar mistakes. I have problems especially for students who don’t make so many grammar mistakes; however, they have great problems understanding what an essay should be, so for me, placing those students is very hard; For me, audience awareness stood out. That was a big problem, and things like organization and stuff like that. You just kind of get to see what their problems are, so that’s probably the biggest way it carried over; One thing that might be interesting. I don’t know how you would phrase a question but something about how do you make the distinction maybe between 110/111/112?; It was most interesting when we saw things like ESL mistakes and students that weren’t international students who were American students. I know we did have concerns about ESL students and whether to place them in the regular GSW program, and say 110, or to put them in a separate ESL class. I think mostly when we had concerns, it was just when we weren’t sure which category an essay went into; I mean, you might ask a question about when you have an essay that looks like it’s between a 110 and a 111, what factors are the most important in determining which category the essay goes into?; I guess the situation that stands out for me were those unusual ones. Like I remember an essay that we read that was a complete rant about why the student felt like he shouldn’t have to write the essay and how he didn’t want to write the essay; I think it’s unfortunate that they [placement evaluators] have to read so many on the same topic, and those difficult cases that they believe straddle the courses and that; I don’t want to call it plagiarism, but maybe imitation or extraneous help even though they’re given a specific amount of time.
Conclusions

The pilot study results led to the revision of the original principal research questions and revision and creation of the supporting research questions, which focused the study on the constructivist content validity inquiry. At the end of this section and appendix, the “Rationale for Research Questions,” pp. 255-267, provides a thorough explanation of how each research question grew out of the pilot study findings and original research questions. Each revised research questions is provided alongside the original research question (if applicable) and is followed by a justification based upon the pilot study outcomes. In particular, the research questions are discussed with respect to the data analysis of the two groups of pilot study research participants--the 2006 Placement Prompt Committee members and 2005 Placement Evaluators.

Each of the two groups of pilot study participants--the 2006 Placement Prompt Committee and 2005 Placement Program participants--impacted the principal research question and supporting research questions. Whereas the Placement Prompt Committee provided information about the design of the 2006 placement model, the former placement program participants supplied information about how evaluators might employ this model in 2006. The analysis of the data collected from the Placement Prompt Committee foregrounded the purpose of the placement test in eliciting persuasive responses, responses contextualized within the GSW curriculum. As a result, this analysis led to the revision of the principal research question and aspects of the supporting research questions that addressed the range of students’ writing skills in producing persuasive responses and curricular exemplars. In particular, the Placement Prompt Committee findings led to the principal research question and the first, sixth, seventh, and eighth supporting research questions (see Rationale for Research Questions, “2006 Placement Prompt Committee Participants,” pp. 255-257). Because the 2005 Placement Program participants
addressed a host of placement readers’ evaluative tendencies, the data analysis regarding this group led to the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh supporting research questions (see Rationale for Research Questions, “2005 Placement Program Participants,” pp. 258-267).

**Rationale for Research Questions**

**2006 Placement Prompt Committee Participants**

**Principal Research Question**

What rhetorical values will guide BGSU’s GSW Program placement evaluators in placing students into one of the first-year writing courses, English 110 (Developmental Writing), English 111 (Introductory Writing), or English 112 (Varieties of English), and to what extent will evaluators’ rhetorical values and placement decisions exhibit constructivist content validity?

**Original Principal Research Question:** What rhetorical values guide BGSU’s GSW Program placement evaluators in placing students into one of the first-year writing courses, English 110 (Developmental Writing), English 111 (Introductory Writing), or English 112 (Varieties of English)?

With respect to the 2006 GSW Placement Prompt Committee, the purpose of GSW placement was to help students produce their best persuasive essays within a curriculum based on argumentative writing. Because committee members invoked the constellations “appropriateness” and “strategy” to achieve the “purpose of placement” in the test design, the importance of constructivist content validity emerged from the analysis of how the Placement Prompt Committee designed the placement test to function. Since curricular and pedagogical matters were at the heart of the process of selecting articles and writing prompts, measuring the constructivist content validity of placement evaluators’ rhetorical decisions seemed appropriate and useful and led to a more specific focus in the revised principal research question in the latter part of this question: “to what extent will evaluators’ rhetorical values and placement decisions exhibit constructivist content validity?” The committee created a task that reflects the GSW curriculum; moreover, this placement essay task was a vehicle for the curriculum as is the GSW placement model.

Following both stages of the placement test design, Gina and Marlow reflected on how they selected articles and wrote prompts to facilitate this curriculum-based placement task, and they emphasized the importance of helping students produce their best possible persuasive responses with respect to the GSW curriculum. Gina (personal communication, February 13, 2006) pointed out that “the purpose of selecting good articles is to help the students demonstrate his/her strongest ability,” and the article should not be a “hurdle” or barrier and prevent students from producing their “best” work. Marlow (personal communication, April 6, 2006) affirmed Gina’s assertion that the committee should find articles “that will allow every student to work with
them,” and Marlow (personal communication, March 2, 2006) argued that the “the task shouldn’t interfere with the student’s ability to perform it” or demonstrate “who was or wasn’t up to it.” As with selecting articles, Gina (personal communication, April 12, 2006) explained that it is important to create prompts that “generate something that would give us a good idea of where the student is in our curriculum” in order to “see where the person would best be placed into our curriculum.” With respect to the principal goal of the committee, she said, “We’re attempting to invite a response, and then our goal is to look at that response at it stands now and see where the person would best be placed into our curriculum.” In other words, the writing prompt should elicit a response at “face value” that would allow placement evaluators to match students’ skill levels within the curriculum, and more specifically, the course sequence.

Supporting Research Questions

1. Assuming that evaluative tendencies are both unarticulated and articulated, what will be the full range of placement readers’ rhetorical values—which may include both implicit, unspoken values, and explicit, spoken values—with regard to the curriculum? How will identifying evaluators’ rhetorical values articulate a fuller range of students’ writing skills within the course sequence—English 110, English 111, and English 112—and the range of students’ writing abilities within each individual course? How will identifying a fuller range of readers’ rhetorical values more clearly define the curricular boundaries between courses within the sequence?

6. To what extent will placement evaluators speculate about students’ writing abilities beyond the “face value” of their placement essays? First, to what extent will teaching experiences help placement evaluators see the entire range of students’ “real” rather than “ideal” writing abilities within each “placement category” (English 110, English 111, and English 112), and consequently, help define the beginning and end point of each category within the curriculum? Second, to what extent will placement evaluators rely upon Broad’s (2003) “constructing writers” contextual criteria category, such as “imagined details” or “the fictional portrayals of student authors’ lives,” (p. 89) in making placement decisions?

Both of these supporting research questions have one main idea in common: the importance of placement evaluators’ articulation of rhetorical values that will identify students’ actual writing abilities within both the course and placement category sequences. These supporting research questions were designed in terms of the parameters of the test design—the range of all students’ skills entering the entire course sequence and placement categories and the range of students’ skills within each course and placement category. As a result, placement evaluators’ decisions that fall within this curricular range were studied.

Relying on their own teaching experiences, the Placement Prompt Committee members created a placement test and task that would include the entire real range of writers within the course sequence—English 110, English 111, and English 112—a task which parallels the placement categories. Placement Committee members chose articles to apply to the entire range of student testers. For example, members sought articles that would help students illustrate their skill levels within the curriculum (e.g. constellation “appropriateness”/criterion “sophistication”); articles
that addressed all students directly (e.g. constellation “appropriateness”/ criterion “audience”); articles and prompts that would be comprehensible for all students (e.g. constellation “appropriateness”/ criterion “readability” and constellation “strategy”/ criterion “clarity”); and articles and prompts that presented topics and/or ideas that would be familiar and accessible to the full range of students entering the course sequence (e.g. constellation “appropriateness”/ criterion “prior knowledge” and constellation “strategy”/ criterion “prior knowledge”).

7. What rhetorical values will placement evaluators use to place (or not place) essays that “appear” to fall outside of the placement category range and curriculum, such as essays written in non-persuasive genres, essays written by nonnative and nonstandard speakers of English, or essays written off- prompt or off-topic?

8. To what extent will placement evaluators use their knowledge of curricular exemplars or model essays (as demonstrated in GSW’s 110/111 Sample Evaluated Essays Manual and 112 Sample Evaluated Essays Manual) and/or match students’ perceived abilities to write persuasive pieces to one of the argumentative essay assignments taught in the course sequence (proposing a solution, speculating about causes, arguing a position, justifying an evaluation, etc.) in making placement decisions?

Both of these supporting research questions focus on a student’s ability to write persuasive essays that approximate curricular exemplars. As a result, these supporting research questions were designed to examine the rhetorical values that guided evaluators’ placement decisions with respect to their knowledge of model essays. The Placement Prompt Committee designed the test to elicit specific, persuasive responses to be judged against curricular exemplars; as a result, these supporting research questions were created to differentiate between essays that fell within and outside of the curriculum, and consequently, to examine placement readers’ evaluative tendencies in both instances.

As previously discussed, Gina (personal communication, February 13, 2006) explained that the goal of placement is “to match” students’ “performance to the appropriate spot in the curriculum.” Therefore, the placement test must elicit persuasive responses that can be compared with the exemplars of the GSW curriculum. Gina (personal communication, February 14) asserted that students must address “the exemplars of argument” to be “placed highly,” for the test gauges the sophistication of students’ persuasive writing abilities with respect to the GSW curriculum. Overall, Placement Prompt Committee members selected articles that resembled curricular exemplars (e.g. constellation “appropriateness”/ criteria “persuasive response” and “exemplar”) and composed prompts that paralleled specific GSW essay assignments (e.g. constellation “strategy”/ criterion “curriculum”) in order to help students write their best persuasive pieces.
2005 Placement Evaluator Participants

Supporting Research Questions

1. Assuming that evaluative tendencies are both unarticulated and articulated, what will be the full range of placement readers’ rhetorical values—which may include both implicit, unspoken values, and explicit, spoken values—with regard to the curriculum? How will identifying evaluators’ rhetorical values articulate a fuller range of students’ writing skills within the course sequence—English 110, English 111, and English 112—and the range of students’ writing abilities within each individual course? How will identifying a fuller range of readers’ rhetorical values more clearly define the curricular boundaries between courses within the sequence?

With respect to the 2005 Placement Program Participants, this supporting research question was formulated based upon summarized information from the coded categories “Issue of Honesty,” “Implicit Rhetorical Values,” “Effect of Evaluation on Teaching,” “Crucial Evaluative Decisions,” and the “Effect of Disagreement on Evaluation.” There are two parts to this supporting research question. The first half of the question, based upon the coded categories “Issue of Honesty” and “Implicit Rhetorical Values,” is the following: “Assuming that evaluative tendencies are both unarticulated and articulated, what will be the full range of placement readers’ rhetorical values—which may include both implicit, unspoken values, and explicit, spoken values—with regard to the curriculum?”

The first sentence of this supporting research question was designed to identify implicit rhetorical values. Overall, employing placement criteria and rhetorical values to evaluative decisions often appears to be a somewhat intuitive process relying on implicit, hidden, unspoken, and/or not fully articulated assumptions about what writing skills students should possess when entering a composition course. Rhetorical values are often implicit when placement evaluators rely upon an exemplar model, the model GSW employs, in which assessors frequently rely upon intuitive, subconscious rhetorical values based upon both tangible and intangible experiences with a composition curriculum.

Given that normed values are explicit, participants asserted that many values are implicit and subconscious; these decisions are regularly employed but seldom (if ever) articulated. Gina (personal communication, March 16, 2006), the 2005 Placement Coordinator, explained, “The things that we hold implicit we may not articulate because they are givens, and they are invisible.” “Loretta” (personal communication, March 16, 2006), a 2005 placement evaluator, pointed out that “a lot of placement decisions we make subconsciously,” and “they are so naturalized we don’t even see them.” “Elaine” (personal communication, March 16, 2006), a 2005 placement evaluator, explained that essay placement decisions were “internalized” or not fully articulated: “I think when it comes easily to us, we internalize it and go.” Gina (personal communication, March 16, 2006) provided an example of an unarticulated rhetorical criterion. During the first 2005 training session, she said that when she asked new placement evaluators what they considered first when looking at a piece, she received a myriad of answers. However, she observed, “No one said, ‘They should first look to see if what they are looking at is even an essay.’” She explained that this criterion was “probably implicit” but “never articulated.”
The second half of the question, based upon data from the coded categories “Effect of Evaluation on Teaching,” “Crucial Evaluative Decisions,” and “Effect of Disagreement on Evaluation,” is the following: “How will identifying evaluators’ rhetorical values articulate a fuller range of students’ writing skills within the course sequence—English 110, English 111, and English 112—and the range of students’ writing abilities within each individual course? How will identifying a fuller range of readers’ rhetorical values more clearly define the curricular boundaries between courses within the sequence?” With respect to the themes “Crucial Evaluative Decisions” and the “Effect of Disagreement on Evaluation,” interview questions were designed to examine how GSW courses parallel placement categories, how the range of students’ skills and abilities within these courses parallels students’ skills within the placement categories, and how the borders, or boundaries between individual courses, parallel the borders between placement categories. These issues are further addressed with respect to the 2006 GSW Instructor Participants of the study.

With respect to the “Effect of Evaluation on Teaching,” participants discussed the “range of students’ writing abilities” within each course and corresponding placement category; in other words, they asserted that course content paralleled placement categories. Gina (personal communication, March 16, 2006) explained that students are not placed into an arbitrary range of “one through six,” but students are placed directly into the curriculum. Overall, former placement evaluators discussed how the placement process helped them to better understand the range of students’ skills within their classes; in other words, they linked the range of students’ skills in English 110, English 111, and English 112 to the corresponding placement categories. In other words, the placement process forecasts where students will be placed into the actual course sequence.

Likewise, Elaine (personal communication, March 16, 2006) argued that placement provides teachers with an idea of the range of students’ skills in the classroom. Similarly, Olivia (personal communication, February 23, 2006) explained that she noted “the huge range of abilities” in placing essays, and she was surprised to “see how weak the weakest essays were,” for she had assumed students would have already possessed certain skills before entering English 110 or English 111. However, she explained that process helped her when she taught English 110 because she said she better understood “the weakest starting point” for her English 110 students. Gina (personal communication, February 13, 2006) pointed out that placing students has helped her become “mindful of the wide range of students that appear in any class.” She explained that placement has enabled her to see beyond “stereotypical 111 students” to a wider, more realistic range of student ability both within placement categories and classes, from “low 110” to “high 110,” for instance. She (personal communication, March 16, 2006) pointed out that after training, placement evaluators begin to “have a better sense of range” with respect to students’ writing abilities.

With respect the issue of placing essays on the “borders,” a key “Crucial Evaluative Decision” that former placement administrators and evaluators discussed repeatedly, involved the last sentence of this supporting research question: “How will identifying a fuller range of readers’ rhetorical values more clearly define the curricular boundaries between courses within the sequence?” During the group interview, Loretta (personal communication, March 16, 2006)
argued that the 110/111 placement is the “crucial” and most important distinction: “Do they go into 111 or 110?”

Concerning the “Effect of Disagreement on Evaluation” with regard to the 111 and 112 “border,” Elaine (personal communication, February 14, 2006) pointed out that she and her evaluation partner would sometimes disagree about the “finer distinctions” between courses, such as English 111/112 borderline decisions. However, she explained that she and her partner only disagreed over adjacent placements: “It was never...should this be a 110 placement or a 112?” Concerning the “beginning” and “end” points of each class and placement category, she argued that serving as a placement reader helped her to realistically see where students begin in a class. She pointed out, “You kind of think students are going to be at a certain level, and they’re not always.” She explained that placement helped her see “benchmarks” or starting points in classes as well as some of students’ typical writing “problems.”

2. How will temporal effects, or the passage of time, in the Placement Program affect readers’ rhetorical values and evaluative decisions with regard to the curriculum? Will evaluators consistently employ a wide range of normed, curricular criteria, or will they move away from evaluative tendencies based on curricular values, towards more idiosyncratic criteria or small distinctive subsets of values in making evaluative decisions over time?

Original Supporting Research Question: Are there rhetorical values that guide placement decisions not included within the defined parameters of the placement materials and training sessions?

Based upon the themes “Evaluators’ Initial Concerns,” “Evaluators’ Later Concerns,” “Effect of Idiosyncrasies on Evaluation,” and the “Effect of Norming on Evaluation,” this supporting research question was created to examine how the passage of time over the course of the Placement Program, June through July, affected evaluators’ placement decisions. Placement evaluators’ initial and consequent rhetorical values, evaluative concerns, feelings before and after placement training sessions, evaluators’ idiosyncratic assessment tendencies, and evaluators’ exit assessment evaluative tendencies were examined in the study.

For the 2006 GSW Placement Program, some evaluators read placement essays for the first time, and some readers returned for a second or third time. With the exception of two placement evaluators, the 2005 GSW Placement Evaluator participants in the pilot study had placed essays for only one year previously; only one evaluator who participated in this part of the pilot study had placed essays for more than one year. In fact, only two placement evaluators in the 2005 Placement Program had more than one year of experience placing essays. Therefore, the data gathered pertains primarily to how new placement evaluators would evaluate essays. Unfortunately, how returning evaluators would be affected by the passage of time could not be anticipated.

During the interviews, placement evaluators discussed how their evaluative tendencies evolved over the course of the 2005 Placement Program. With regard to the theme “Evaluators’ Initial Concerns,” Kristy (personal communication, March 16, 2006), a 2005 placement evaluator,
explained that she was initially very concerned that her evaluative criteria matched the Placement Coordinators, and she was focused on correctness: “Was I doing everything correctly?”

Concerning “Evaluators’ Later Concerns,” Kristy pointed out, however, that as time passed, she was more concerned with being fair and not “too flexible” in her placement decisions because she became “bored” and “tired” as students’ “interests” and the “contents” of their essays repeated and overlapped. Likewise, Loretta (personal communication, March 16, 2006) concurred and said that because evaluators seldom see “outstanding essays,” their placements might become unfair over time.

Regarding the “Effect of Idiosyncrasies on Evaluation,” 2005 Assistant Placement Coordinator Ben, (personal communication, March 16, 2006) highlighted another temporal affect of the placement process with regard to normed and idiosyncratic evaluative criteria; he argued that at the beginning of the Placement Program, evaluators are very “conscientious” and focused on normed criteria. However, as evaluators get deeper into the program two problems may arise: evaluators may begin to privilege their idiosyncratic “old fetishes,” and evaluators may begin to privilege a subset of criteria that they have been regularly using rather than the entire set of normed criteria. Therefore, he explained that the Placement Coordinator’s norming sessions attempted to address this issue.

Regarding “Evaluators’ Initial Concerns” and “Effect of Norming on Evaluation,” Ben also explained that placement readers experience “nervousness” when they begin the placement process and view it as a “foreign responsibility” despite their training as teachers. Similarly, Elaine (personal communication, March 16, 2006) explained that she initially worried about being blamed for making inaccurate placements. Kristy (personal communication, March 16, 2006) said that in the beginning she “was very worried and also maybe overwhelmed” since she had not placed essays previously.

Participants also believed that practice with entrance-level criteria is another temporal factor influencing placement decisions. Gina (personal communication, March 16, 2006) explained that new placement evaluators produce “hybrid placements like 110/111” and are hesitant to make firm placement decisions due to “anxiety.” She (personal communication, February 15, 2006) explained that new evaluators initially have difficulty placing “borderline essays” such as English 110/111 placements. However, she contended that there is a “learning curve,” and later in the placement process, the “line” between courses, such as English 110 and English 111 become more recognizable. In fact, Elaine (personal communication, March 16, 2006) said that during the first two days of the program, she used a lot of “splits” or borderline placements.

In addition, Gina (personal communication, March 16, 2006) explained that placement evaluators may initially express some “shock” over the “lack of quality” of some essays. Similarly, Ben (personal communication, March 16, 2006) explained that “to see those essays [110 essays] for the first time...can be surprising.” However, Gina (personal communication, March 16, 2006) asserted that after evaluators get over the initial “shock,” they begin to see the fuller range of evaluative concerns, which alludes to the first supporting research question issue
of “range of students’ writing abilities”; in other words, the passage of time may help placement evaluators to see a fuller range of skill levels.

With respect to “Evaluators’ Later Concerns,” some participants discussed how “boredom” could cause evaluative stability or shifts. For instance, Elaine (personal communication, March 16, 2006) explained that even though there was a “boredom factor,” focusing on the same topic kept her in a “comfort zone” and gave her an instant familiarity with the topic. Indeed, Gina (personal communication, March 16, 2006) acknowledged that students will write “an awful lot of the same stuff” on the same topics, so “boredom” can cause a “drift” or “shift” in evaluative tendencies. However, she explained that pair evaluation partners and norming sessions are meant to address evaluative shifts, a key theme of “Effect of Norming on Evaluation.”

Many placement evaluators may have to make an initial “shift” from scoring portfolios using exit criteria to placing essays using placement criteria, referring to the theme “Evaluators’ Initial Concerns.” Gina (personal communication, March 16, 2006) pointed out that some former placement evaluators initially had an exit-assessment mindset and asked her, “Can I use a rubric?” Elaine (personal communication, March 16, 2006) asserted that she shifted from a “grady,” “rubric mind frame” to a placement assessment mindset. Gina (personal communication, March 16, 2006) explained that evaluators move from “trying to grade” to asking, “At what level in our curriculum would this best fit?” In other words, she explained that evaluators initially ask, “Would this [essay] pass?” However, evaluators later ask, “How does that [essay] match up with the curriculum?” This last question alludes to the principal research question and the importance of the curriculum and constructivist content validity.

3. What will be the “content” or “curricular” validity of individual and collaborative placement decisions? First, how will placement evaluators individually and collaboratively prioritize rhetorical values with respect to high and low order curricular concerns? Second, how will the dynamic of the collaborative decision-making of paired placement evaluators influence rhetorical values and evaluative priorities with respect to the curriculum?

This supporting research question was based upon the themes “Effect of Pairing on Evaluation,” “Effect of Other Influences on Paired Evaluation,” “Evaluators’ General Strategies,” and “Crucial Evaluative Decisions.” This supporting research question was designed to identify the evaluative priorities of individuals and paired evaluators with respect to their rhetorical values. Based upon the findings, various general factors (including but not limited to evaluators’ personalities, agreement and disagreement, pairing, and the speed of reading) are examined to determine their influence on paired evaluators’ placement decisions. This supporting research question examines placement evaluators’ high- and low-order rhetorical evaluative priorities.

There are two primary stages of evaluation for placement evaluators. First, the individual placement evaluator records placement decisions on the Placement Note Sheets. Second, individuals meet in pairs to compare notes on individual placement decisions in order to collaboratively place essays. With respect to the number of third readings conducted, Gina (personal communication, February 13, 2006) believed that before meeting with their partners,
individual placements would agree approximately 80 percent of the time; however, after discussing the placements collaboratively, agreement would be closer to 95 percent.

With regard to the theme “Effect of Pairing on Evaluation,” the level of agreement between placement evaluators, participants pointed out that pairing could bring both a dynamic of comfort or discomfort. During the group interview, Elaine (personal communication, March 16, 2006) explained that discussing placement decisions with her partner, which included defending placements or persuading her partner of certain placements, helped her to feel more “comfortable” with final placement decisions. Similarly, Kristy (personal communication, February 23, 2006) noted that she was concerned about being fair in her evaluations; however, she explained that her partner agreed with her “almost all the time,” which made her feel better about placement decisions. She (personal communication, February 23, 2006) argued that these collaborations “reaffirmed” that she was placing students’ essays fairly. Loretta (personal communication, March 16, 2006) contended that discussing and arguing placement decisions were more helpful than assessing essays individually. With respect to agreement, Ben (personal communication, March 16, 2006) also pointed out that paired evaluation sessions helped to resolve “split” or “borderline” placements. However, regarding disagreements between paired evaluators, Loretta (personal communication, March 16, 2006) explained that she felt bad when she and her partner could not agree and sent the essay to the Placement Coordinator for a third reading; she said she sometimes felt like her collaboration with her partner could have been more amiable and conciliatory.

Participants also speculated about other factors that might influence the paired evaluator dynamic. While she attested to having a good relationship with her partner, Elaine (personal communication, March 16, 2006) surmised that “personality can be an issue” and that evaluators who are “not willing to communicate” could make evaluation difficult. Olivia (personal communication, March 16, 2006) speculated that evaluators might rush their evaluations if their partners finished placing essays before them. Similarly, Loretta (personal communication, March 16, 2006) believed that her partner was often frustrated because she “was always waiting” for her to finish placing essays.

With respect to the theme “Evaluator’s General Strategies,” participants discussed how they individually and collaboratively prioritized their evaluative tendencies with regard to placement decisions. Regarding readers’ high- and low-order evaluative priorities, former evaluators discussed how they prioritized global and local concerns. For instance, Loretta (personal communication, March 16, 2006) explained that she felt like global issues were the most important factors in making English 110 placements unless the grammatical errors were pervasive. Overall, Loretta said that she “was more critical about the global issues,” and she explained that if the placement sample was an essay, had a controlling idea, defended a position, and was supported with examples, she then looked at the grammatical issues. However, she asked--“Where do you draw the line?”--when it came to weighing global and grammatical concerns in making that English 110/111 distinction. Likewise, Kristy (personal communication, February 23, 2006) contended that the “overall structure” and the author’s ability to support his or her argument(s) were the most important evaluative criteria, and “grammar and mechanics” were less important evaluative concerns. However, Gina (personal communication, March 16, 2006) noted that sometimes evaluators will initially take “as their primary placement criterion”
grammatical errors if these errors are pervasive. Therefore, she explained that training can help evaluators articulate “criteria that are most important to them” or their evaluative priorities.

4. How and to what extent will the role of the Placement Coordinator and placement training and norming sessions influence the rhetorical values and evaluative tendencies of placement evaluators with respect to the curriculum? More specifically, to what extent will placement evaluators rely on the Placement Coordinator’s instructions and/or the curricular, entrance-level “textual” criteria for placement as detailed in the GSW Placement Evaluators’ Handbook and training sessions? Overall, to what extent will the placement evaluation training and norming sessions influence actual placement decisions?

Original Supporting Research Question: To what extent do placement evaluators rely on the entrance-level textual criteria for placement as detailed in the GSW Placement Evaluators’ Handbook and training sessions? More specifically, to what extent does the placement evaluation training carry over to actual placement decisions?

This supporting research question was adapted from the original supporting research question: “To what extent do placement evaluators rely on the entrance-level ‘textual’ criteria for placement as detailed in the GSW Placement Evaluators’ Handbook and training sessions? More specifically, to what extent does the placement evaluation training carry over to actual placement decisions?” Based upon the themes “Effect of Placement Coordinators on Evaluation” and “Effect of Norming on Evaluation,” I expanded the supporting research question to explore how the Placement Coordinator’s role in training and norming sessions may influence the placement evaluators’ rhetorical values and placement decisions in the study.

With regard to the themes “Effect of Placement Coordinators on Evaluation” and “Effect of Norming on Evaluation,” the Placement Coordinator creates and/or revises the training materials and conducts the initial training sessions. The Coordinator devotes the first two days to train placement evaluators to use the curricular, entrance-level “textual” criteria for placement as detailed in the GSW Placement Evaluators’ Handbook. Gina, the Placement Coordinator, discussed the “evaluator’s roles and responsibilities,” “the importance of accurate placement,” “important indicators of quality in writing,” “grading versus placement,” and “GSW courses and placement criteria,” (Placement Evaluators’ Handbook, 2006-07, p. 38), and she provided evaluators with structured practice sessions to place sample essays. Gina also held brief norming sessions throughout the Placement Program to recalibrate readers. While I assisted the Coordinator with all of these activities, I neither led the activities nor provided instructions to the placement evaluators. Ben, the Assistant Placement Coordinator, (personal communication, February 10, 2006) described his relationship with Gina as “co-equal.” However, the Assistant Placement Coordinator primarily provide administrative support to the Placement Coordinator and does not instruct the readers.

During the interviews, former placement evaluators reported that the training significantly influenced their evaluative decisions. Olivia (personal communication, March 16, 2006) explained that the training helped prepare her for “those weird case” placements. She explained that training made her “more confident” in making definitive placements rather than taking “the safe route” and placing all students into English 111. Elaine (personal communication, March
16, 2006) said that the training helped her feel like she was “pretty much in line with everybody,” which made her “feel a little better” about placing essays individually. During the group interview, both Loretta and Kristy (personal communication, March 16, 2006) concurred that the placement criteria were clear, and the training sessions were useful.

Regarding normed, calibrated placement criteria, Oliva (personal communication, March 16, 2006) recalled that readers were trained to focus on placing essays based upon criteria or “qualities” pertaining to each placement category; she contended that focusing on normed criteria was “our biggest strategy” as placement evaluators. Gina (personal communication, March 16, 2006) argued that if readers are trained and normed, placements will be reliable and evaluators will not become “fixed on idiosyncratic kinds of things.” She (personal communication, February 13) explained that placement training gave placement evaluators the opportunity to practice placing students into courses rather than giving into the tendency “to straddle a class” or make “borderline” placements, such as “high 110, low 111.”

With regard to her “role” as an experienced placement administrator, Gina (personal communication, March 16, 2006) explained that during the 2005 placement training sessions, she took a proactive role in building evaluators’ confidence in making placement decisions. She explained that she provided evaluators with words of encouragement “so that they can step forward and say what they think a little bit more.” She also praised evaluators, and she said to them, “You’re comments were very good. They made a lot of sense.”

5. To what extent will readers rely upon their experiences and knowledge as teachers to guide their placement decisions? First, to what extent will placement evaluators rely upon Broad’s (2003) “contextual criteria,” which involves the “expert model” or Richard Haswell's “exemplar” categorization in placement assessment? Second, to what extent will placement evaluators rely upon their recollections of the writing skills of former students in English 110, English 111, or English 112 to assess the writing skills exhibited in placement essays in making placement decisions?

Original Supporting Research Question: To what extent do readers rely upon their experience and knowledge as teachers to guide their placement decisions? How is teaching experience linked to placement decisions? In other words, to what extent do placement evaluators rely on Bob Broad’s (2003) “contextual criteria” involving the “expert model” in placement assessment or Richard Haswell’s (1998, 2001a, 2001b) exemplar” categorization?

This supporting research question is a revision of two original supporting research questions: “To what extent do readers rely upon their experience and knowledge as teachers to guide their placement decisions?” and “How is teaching experience linked to placement decisions? In other words, to what extent do placement evaluators rely on Bob Broad’s ‘contextual criteria’ involving the “expert model” in placement assessment or Richard Haswell's “exemplar” categorization?”

Based on the themes “Effect of Prior Knowledge of Students’ Performances” and “Effect of Teachers’ Experiences on Evaluation,” the revised supporting research question places emphasis on teachers’ curricular experiences and recollections of students’ writing skills. For instance,
with respect to the both themes, Elaine (personal communication, February 15, 2006) explained that as a mentor of new teaching assistants, her placement experiences not only helped her explain where students “are starting from” to her mentees, but her placement knowledge built her ethos as both a mentor and teacher.

This supporting research question also addresses the exemplar model of placement assessment, which permeated nearly every facet of the pilot study. The 2005 Placement Evaluators were experienced GSW instructors; many of their placement judgments were based on their experiences as teachers and their knowledge of former students. As a result, the importance of teachers’ recollections is a crucial element in studying the constructivist content validity of placement evaluators’ decisions.

6. To what extent will placement evaluators speculate about students’ writing abilities beyond the “face value” of their placement essays? First, to what extent will teaching experiences help placement evaluators see the entire range of students’ “real” rather than “ideal” writing abilities within each “placement category” (English 110, English 111, and English 112), and consequently, help define the beginning and end point of each category within the curriculum? Second, to what extent will placement evaluators rely upon Broad’s (2003) “constructing writers” contextual criteria category, such as “imagined details” or “the fictional portrayals of student authors’ lives,” (p. 89) in making placement decisions?

Based upon the theme “Effect of Evaluation on Teaching,” the issue of “real” versus “ideal” writing abilities was discussed during the group interview. Kristy (personal communication, March 16, 2006) explained that before she taught English 111 for the first time, she “assumed their [students’] writing would be great.” As a nonnative speaker of English, she (personal communication, February 23) explained, “From my standpoint of view… I thought that probably those people who speak better might write better.” However, she found that students’ writing was not as strong as she had expected, so when she became a placement reader she found their writing was “not really so good,” which she said better explained students’ difficulties in the classroom. Likewise, during placement reading, she said she “overestimated” students’ abilities to organize their essays. Kristy explained that because so many students had difficulty structuring their essays, when she taught a GSW course after placement, she focused “more on structure and organization.”

With regard to the theme “Evaluators’ General Strategies,” the issues of “speculation” and “imagined details” about placement essays are addressed. Gina (personal communication, April 12, 2006) explained that evaluators should evaluate the “face value” of a placement essay: “We’re attempting to invite a response and then our goal is to look at that response as it stands now and see where the person would best be placed into our curriculum.” During the focus group interview, Gina (personal communication, March 16, 2006) explained, “We base on what we see in front of our face, not what we speculate might be the case or based upon speculation about future performance.” Elaine (personal communication, February 15, 2006) asserted that there may be a tendency to “imagine too much into the readings.” She explained that there is a “danger of bringing too much as a reader to the test” and expecting too much from students based upon speculation. Overall, the guiding assumption of the placement test design is that the
students’ essays represent their best attempts at persuasive pieces. However, there is a natural tendency to speculate about students’ performances beyond the “face-value” of the placement essay. For example, some former placement evaluators speculated that students did not take the placement test seriously and could have written stronger essays. As a result, to what extent placement evaluators employed Broad’s (2003) “imagined details” in this study was explored.

7. What rhetorical values will placement evaluators use to place (or not place) essays that appear to fall outside of the placement category range and curriculum, such as essays written in non-persuasive genres, essays written by nonnative and nonstandard speakers of English, or essays written off-prompt or off-topic?

This supporting research question was based upon the theme “Problematic Placements.” This supporting research question was created to examine the rhetorical values that guided placement evaluators in evaluating essays that appear to fall outside of the curriculum. 2005 placement evaluators and administrators were concerned about essays that did not easily match up to the curriculum, such as essays written in non-persuasive genres, essays written by nonnative and nonstandard speakers of English, and essays written off-prompt or off-topic.

Loretta (personal communication, March 16, 2006) explained that it was difficult to place students who exhibited sophisticated writing skills but approached the task from “a narrative perspective” or did not write “an overtly argumentative essay.” She also pointed out that more training discussions needed to focus on how to place students from various “ethnic” and “class” backgrounds and “who are writing with a certain kind of dialect.” Similarly, Dorothy (personal communication, February 10, 2006) said that she was concerned about how to place students who wrote essays that had “good sentence structure and focus” but “did not address the prompt.” Similarly, Olivia (personal communication, February 23, 2006) recalled one “unusual” essay that included a “rant” about why the reader “felt like he shouldn’t have to write the essay.” Dorothy (personal communication, February 10) also noted that placing “ESL essays” that “were written by nonnative speakers” was a placement issue that needed to be addressed; she explained that training in TESL is needed to recognize nonnative speakers. Olivia (personal communication, February 23, 2006) explained that she found it interesting when native students made “ESL mistakes.” Overall, she said placement decisions were problematic when it was not clear to which placement category an essay belonged. For instance, she explained that she and her evaluation partner expressed concerns when placing international students into GSW courses.
APPENDIX B: STUDY’S DATA AND RESULTS

Pair 1
110 Placement Criteria Glossary

The abbreviation “T” refers to the textual definition of each criterion, and the abbreviation “C” refers to the contextual definition of each criterion. The abbreviation “RQ” refers to particular supporting research questions in the study.

Argument: T. Essays weakly address the reader or the arguments are problematic or nonexistent. C. Student writers could improve their abilities to write arguments with assistance from instructors.

Audience/Reader-Based: T. Essays exhibit slight audience awareness. C. Writers need further training to make their writing more reader-based and to develop audience awareness.

Benefit/Need/Help: C. Writers may benefit from or need extra assistance/time in English 110 to improve their writing skills, such as sentence structure, development, metadiscourse, and arguments.

Choppiness of Prose: T. Sentences are repeatedly short and choppy.

Clarity/Readability: T. Essays are difficult to read due to unclear main ideas, theses, organization, sentences, references, words, and/or repetition. The lack of clarity may refer to the entire essay or essay components. C. The writers’ thinking lacks clarity.

Clichés: T. Essays rely heavily on trite expressions.

Comma Issues: T. Commas are missing or misplaced.

Comma Splices: T. Essays contain comma splices: two independent clauses joined by a comma.

Conversational: T. The writing is informal and conversational. C. Writers are writing their ideas in a conversational tone and need help to focus their writing.

Development: T. Essays are undeveloped. C. Writers need help developing their ideas.

Enough Problems: T. Writers essays contain problems, such as poorly worded ideas or thoughts that are/are not pervasive enough to warrant a 110 placement.

Essay Organization/Structure/Five Paragraph: T. Essays are weakly organized or not at all. Some essays are basic five-paragraph themes. C. Writers need work with basic essay organization and argumentation.

Evidence: T. The essays’ evidence are based on personal experience and/or speculation.
Focus: T. The focus of the essays’ paragraphs drift and wander due to factors such as weak transitions, audience awareness, metadiscourse, word usage, etcetera. C. Writers need further practice focusing their essays.

Fragments: T. Essays contain sentence fragments or incomplete sentences.

General: T. Essays are broad in scope.

Homonym: T. Essays contain homonyms, words that are similar phonetically but spelled differently and have different meanings. C. Essays contain homonym errors because of their use of word processors and/or spell checkers.

Informal: T. Essays are informal.

Introduction: T. Essays contain no introductions or the introductions are problematic.

List: T. Essays read like a list.

Main Ideas/Ideas: T. Essays’ ideas are unclear, not connected to the thesis, poorly worded, scarce and unrelated, and/or undeveloped. C. Writers need help developing ideas.

Metadiscourse/Transitions: T. Essays lack effective metadiscourse and transitions—organizational language that helps the audience/reader recognize the connections among the essays’ components. C. Writers need further work with metadiscourse/transitions in 110.

Narrative/Stories/Personal Stories/Self-Centered (RQ 7): T. The narratives and stories are self-centered or focused primarily on the writers’ experiences, and the narratives do not support the main idea or point of the essays. C. Writers will need help in English 110 to help them with the narrative.

Paragraphs: T. Essay paragraphs demonstrate various qualities, such as choppiness, effective and ineffective structure and structure, poor focus, informality, narration, etcetera. Primarily ineffective paragraphing factors are emphasized.

Point of View Shifts: T. Essays contain point of view shifts among first, second, and third person.

Prompt (RQ 7): C. Essays do not focus on the online writing placement test’s instructions.

Repetition: T. Essays contain repetitive components, such as clauses and phrases, which inhibit clarity and formality.

Semicolon: T. Essays contain semicolon issues.

Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions: T. Essays contain awkward sentence constructions, sentence boundary errors, lack of sentence variety, choppy sentences, and/or
disorganized sentences. C. Writers need work recognizing sentence boundaries and combining sentences.

**Spell Check:** C. Writers’ use of their word processors’ spell check function causes them (or doesn’t cause them) to produce spelling and homonym errors.

**Spelling:** T. Essays contain spelling errors.

**Support:** T. Essays contain good and/or sparse support to support the main points.

**Tense Shifts:** T. Essays contain shifts in verb tense.

**Thesis:** T. Overall, the essays’ theses, or main points, are unclear, not connected to the main ideas or paragraphs, and/or nonexistent. C. Writers will have difficulty learning how to write theses in English 111.

**Thoughts:** T. The thoughts expressed in the essays are unclear and/or poorly worded.

**Word Choice/Wordy:** T. Essays contain word choice errors and wordy passages.

**Writer Based:** C. Essays are writer based. Writers utilize narrative, self-centered, stream-of-consciousness strategies in writing the essays.

**Writing Ability of Writers:** C. Writers do not demonstrate the writing skills necessary for English 111 and will struggle in this class.
Pair 1
110 Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples

The following “Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples” corresponds to the preceding “Placement Criteria Glossary.” The in vivo examples for each criterion were studied, criterion-by-criterion, and the preceding glossary containing textual and/or contextual definitions of each individual criterion was written. Numbers in parentheses note the number of times each criterion was invoked overall and according to the four following categories: “110S,” “Borderlines First Time Period,” “Disagreements First Time Period,” “Borderlines Second Time Period,” and “Disagreements Second Time Period.”

Argument (19)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): I saw maybe some semblance of an audience somewhere. I think he addresses parents somewhere or something like that; I had 110+, but that was again the argument.
Contextual (2): Like if she took aside, I think she could have an argument; I think this is someone who needs more help with the concept of an argumentative essay;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): I didn’t really see it as an argument; I didn’t see an argument;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): I saw an argument there; And the logical argument wasn’t great; I saw problems with the argument, too;
Contextual (4): I said it needs major work with an argument; I said he needs a lot of help with argumentative structure and argument; she might benefit from extra time with arguments; he needs major work on arguments;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): He is arguing in a narrative structure, but I can see your point (RQ 7);
Contextual (4): He needs help with basic structure and what argument is; I said definitely needs help with an argument, but I don’t know; I said, needs a lot of work on constructing an effective argument; he presents his argument at times is backward, I thought;

Audience/Reader-Based (4)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None
Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): slight audience awareness issues;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): audience awareness
Contextual (1): I said he needs major work on argument, organization, and making it more reader-based;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (1): It seemed like he didn’t have an idea of who the reader was;

Benefit/Need/Help (23)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (5): Is this person going to really need the extra help in 110?; Is this person going to get the help they need? With 110+, they’re going to go into 112 anyhow, and I think that’ll just make it much stronger; I said poor metadiscourse, point of view shifts, and I think this is someone who needs more help with the concept of an argumentative essay; I think that is someone, who overall, is going to need a little more help; Is this someone who will really benefit from the extra two hours?;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (3): I think the sentence-structure is alright, but this is someone who needs help with what an essay is; I think this is someone who might need help with development of ideas; And combined with the metadiscourse work, this is something that needs 110;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (9): she might benefit from extra time with arguments; he needs major work on argument; Is that something that needs extra attention?; I said he needs a lot of help with argumentative structure and argument; He might need the help of 110; With the narrative and all that, it might warrant the extra help; I think that she might need extra help in getting accustomed to the academic voice; I don’t know if he needs the extra time with that; I think that the discourse is kind of problematic that I think needs sentence combining;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (6): I said definitely needs help with an argument, but I don’t know; He needs help with basic structure and what argument is; I said, needs a lot of work on constructing an effective argument; That’s pretty conversational and repetitive as well, and this is someone who needs a little more focus, I think; this is someone who needs 110 a little more; this is something [placement of commas] that I think she really needs a little more work on; Someone who needs a little more work
Choppiness of Prose (4)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): It was pretty choppy; I saw some fragments and choppiness throughout; I know the choppiness is there;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): I thought there were so many short, choppy sentences that;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Clarity/Readability (34)

110S
Textual (1): “He” is never explained. We don’t know who restored what;

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (6): main ideas in the paragraph weren’t always clear; I kind of had to piece together the main ideas; Hard to follow; main ideas in the paragraph weren’t always clear; I didn’t think the thesis was clear either; It didn’t really relate to anything clearly;
Contextual (1): I can’t see a couple of indicators where the thinking might not be quite as clear;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (11): the organization wasn’t always clear and that there were some sentence boundary issues; This is bad, and we can infer these but it’s not as clear as focused as it might naturally be; she clearly connects it; it got into 110 because of unclear, poorly worded, ideas or thoughts, but I don’t know if it was that pervasive; it’s hard to tell who she’s talking about at times, I think; It seemed hard for me to follow along but I might have been to hard on it; And just reading the whole thing, it kind of felt hard to follow along; It was hard to follow for me, yeah; I just thought it was completely writer-based. I couldn’t really piece anything together; I can see sort of a theme, but it’s hard to figure out;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (7): not clear at times; unclear references; Even though [narrative] it clearly relates (RQ 8); ideas are unclear at times; But this is pretty good and clear otherwise; I can understand what he’s saying, but it’s not very strong;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (9): repetitive and some clarity issues; That’s probably some of the clarity; I didn’t know if her purpose was clear or if it was that I just couldn’t find it; I didn’t understand; By the
end of it, I didn’t understand what he meant by lack of knowledge; I can understand what she is trying to say; I said the transitions were poor; I think I had a hard time reading this one;

Clichés (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): relies on clichés; Cause I might have been getting caught up in the clichés;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Commas Issues (5)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): comma issues; No commas at all

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): placement of commas; this is something [placement of commas] that I think she really needs a little more work on;

Comma Splices (9)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): That’s a comma splice; Here is a comma splice; Here’s a comma splice; Comma
splices stuck out to me;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): I saw comma splices; the lack of a thesis throughout the whole thing to me is really
problematic combined with the comma splices and such; I saw a comma splice;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): placement of commas;
Contextual (1): this is something [placement of commas] that I think she really needs a little
more work on;

Conversational (21)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (5): it’s conversational; It’s conversational; homonym errors and conversational; it was
conversational; That there was a conversational tone;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): the clichés are kind of problematic because it makes it sound more conversational;
I’m not sure that it is conversational;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): It was very conversational; These are really conversational things; There’s also
some writer-based areas, It’s kind of conversational;
Contextual (1): and I think part of that is the fact that it’s conversational, but it also seems to be
like he is letting his ideas out;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (5): I said it was very conversational; it’s somewhat conversational; It’s conversational,
and there are some really odd constructions; I said that it was kind of repetitive and somewhat
conversational; Where did you see the conversational?;
Contextual (5): That’s pretty conversational and repetitive as well, and this is someone who
needs a little more focus, I think;

Development (7)

110S
None
Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): I said there were metadiscourse problems and sparsely developed; I said points not developed;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): I mean there’s nothing there;
Contextual (1): I think this is someone who might need help with development of ideas;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): I said it wasn’t sophisticated or developed; I thought there were so many short, choppy sentences that;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): They weren’t developed or related well, but I didn’t see some of those sentence level things;

Enough Problems (2)

110S
Textual (2): I didn’t see the problems as that pervasive; I didn’t see the problems as that pervasive;

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): It gets away from the focus of why students have such a hard time managing money, and I thought that the 110, that it got into 110 because of unclear, poorly worded, ideas or thoughts, but I don’t know if it was that pervasive;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Essay Organization/Structure/Five Paragraph (23)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (7): I said the organization was rough; the organization needs work; Lack of organization; organizational issues; there was weak organization; it was a five paragraph theme; I mean it’s a pretty decent five paragraph;
Contextual (1): All around I think he needs work with essay;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): I thought that the organization wasn’t always clear and that there were some sentence boundary issues; I said the organization was muddled at the beginning, and then it relies on clichés somewhat

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): Organization; it’s just so disorganized; It’s pretty basic;
Contextual (1): I said he needs a lot of help with argumentative structure and argument;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (6): It’s well-organized, but it’s somewhat conversational and the focus for the paragraphs needs some tightening; It’s kind of organized; He is arguing in a narrative structure, but I can see your point (RQ 7); It’s a five paragraph theme; It is a five paragraph theme; I just said it was five paragraph essay;

Contextual (3): The organization is pretty good, I mean, on a basic level; I thought some of the organization of thoughts were writer-based; I saw organization of thoughts were backwards at times, like how he presents his argument at times is backward, I thought; I think it’s a little more organized than some people might recognize; He needs help with basic structure and what argument is;

Evidence (3)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): There’s a lot of personal evidence (RQ 7);

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (2): Or he doesn’t draw on the relationships between some of his evidence, which I thought; Evidence was kind of speculative (RQ 8);

Focus (27)

110S
None
**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (9):** And she seemed to be, I put all over the place; I said it was vague at times and unfocused; It’s not as focused; it seemed really unfocused all the way through; Like I saw some unfocused paragraphs; This sort of wanders; It seemed like it wandered around; wanders in paragraphs; There’s a lot of personal evidence, and it seems to drift back to her a lot;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (9):** I’m still kind of worried that it still seems to be a little unfocused; This is bad, and we can infer these but it’s not as clear as focused as it might naturally be; It gets away from the focus of why students have such a hard time managing money, and I thought that the 110, that it got into 110 because of unclear, poorly worded, ideas or thoughts, but I don’t know if it was that pervasive; There is still somewhat of a focus. But is it enough?; Let’s put 110+ because there’s a little bit of repetition as well that might be problematic and all together, they might need more focus; The focus of the essay was problematic and weak metadiscourse; But I definitely saw the focus; The focus threw me because I saw that she was saying like why students get little sleep, but then it went into what schools should do and why teens are getting to bet later and then even they know how to balance their time at the end; Yeah, the lack of focus shows she’s not really sure if this is even an essay; I thought that the focus was lacking; I said that she had weak transitions and slight audience awareness issues, which might have been some of those focus things.

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (5):** The paragraphs have poor focus; I didn’t see a focus at all; Some of it just sort of wanders; wanders all over the place; I was getting that feeling that it was wandering, and this is a pretty specific prompt; The paragraphs drift off point at the end;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (1):** the focus for the paragraphs needs some tightening up;

**Contextual (1):** this is someone who needs a little more focus, I think;

**Fragments (12)**

**110S**
None

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (7):** I said that there were a bunch of fragments; Where do you see the fragments?; There is a fragment; I saw some fragments; I saw some fragments; Some fragments; I said that there were fragments;

**Disagreements First Time Period**
None

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (3):** This is a fragment; I saw some fragments in here; there wasn’t big issues with sentences other than a couple of fragments I saw;
Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (2): I saw some fragments; And I noticed that there were a couple of fragments, too;

General (3)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (3): It’s too general; Some of it was just speculative, or pretty general (RQ 8); The kind of general;

Homonym (8)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (5): There are homonym problems in there; There were some homonym and spelling errors; there were homonym errors; homonym issues; homonym issues;

Contextual (1): The homonym errors to me looked like spell check errors rather than entire problems with;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): A lot of homonym errors;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): There are some homonym problems;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Informal (2)

110S
None
Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): It’s very informal;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): Informal;

Introduction (3)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): No introduction; I said the organization was muddled at the beginning, and then it relies on clichés somewhat;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

List (1)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): essay read like a list (RQ 7);
Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Main Ideas/Ideas (7)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): Main ideas weren’t always connected to thesis; I mean I thought she probably had one good idea there, one good idea within this paragraph there; main ideas in the paragraph weren’t always clear;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): poorly worded, ideas or thoughts
Contextual (1): I think this is someone who might need help with development of ideas;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): I said there were few ideas there. They weren’t developed or related well, but I didn’t see some of those sentence level things;

Metadiscourse/Transitions (21)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (12): I said there were metadiscourse problems and sparsely developed; Metadiscourse; metadiscourse was weak; metadiscourse was weak; there were metadiscourse problems; I said poor metadiscourse; I said there were metadiscourse problems; I just wrote that the transitions were lacking and the depth of it; I thought there were good transitions; I recognized that there were good transitions; I said there were transition problems and organizational issues; lack of transitions;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): The focus of the essay was problematic and weak metadiscourse; I said that she had weak transitions and slight audience awareness issues, which might have been some of those focus things;
Contextual (1): And combined with the metadiscourse work, this is something that needs 110;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): The metadiscourse is pretty bad; That the metadiscourse is really; I said will need extra work on sentence variation and transitions;
**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (3):** it had weak metadiscourse and transitions; I thought the metadiscourse work; I said the transitions were poor;

**Narrative/Stories/Personal Stories/Self-Centered (15)**

110S
None

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (2):** the stories don’t always support the point (RQ 7); I said it was very narrative, but the stories don’t always support the point (RQ 7);

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (1):** I said it was pretty narrative (RQ 7);

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (6):** I didn’t see what the narratives--how they related back to her main idea--if there was a main idea (RQ 7); I thought it was really narrative and the points got buried; I mean, the whole thing is a big narrative (RQ 7); Even though [narrative] it clearly relates, and he tries to keep relating it back, I think that he’s lacking some idea as to what a main idea is or (RQ 7); it’s not just the narratives…the fact that the narratives don’t always relate (RQ 7); I said the narrative wasn’t very effective for me on that (RQ 7); It’s not so much narrative, but it’s like [inaudible] (RQ 7);

**Contextual (2):** With the narrative and all that, it might warrant the extra help; Maybe it’s just personal experience that (RQ 7); This is someone’s who is going to have a lot of trouble in 111 if it’s assumed that he can kind of pick up on that. I mean. This is just kind of. It’s so self-centered in some ways that to me this would say 110;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (4):** I saw that it was all narrative (RQ 7); He is arguing in a narrative structure, but I can see your point (RQ 7); The sorts of things I’m seeing in sentence structure and the more narrative things that are happening in the second and third paragraph, I’m thinking it might be a 110+ (RQ 7); This is extremely narrative in style. It’s writer-based for that reason. He’s talking about himself throughout the whole thing (RQ 7);

**Paragraphs (33)**

110S

**Textual (1):** I don’t think it is either ‘cause the first paragraph isn’t that bad;

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (13):** I mean these paragraphs were good maybe by themselves but within the whole of the essay, they didn’t seem to work well together; And I think within these paragraphs, too, it kind of deals with many different things that are more writer-based; It was mostly one paragraph;
one good idea within this paragraph there; main ideas in the paragraph weren’t always clear; I thought paragraph four was. No. It’s this paragraph. It was pretty choppy; the paragraphs were off; The third paragraph; I recognized that there were good transitions and it was a five paragraph theme; wanders in paragraphs; I mean it’s a pretty decent five paragraph; That middle paragraph was really a problem for it. It didn’t really relate to anything clearly; That fourth paragraph is really; There was one paragraph that I was trying; Sometimes I’ll write that down, and then I’ll only see it in a couple of sentences, but this is something that happens in a few paragraphs; Like I saw some unfocused paragraphs.

**Disagreements First Time Period**

*Textual (4)*: I saw some problems with sentences, a couple of awkward sentences, and I thought that a couple of the paragraphs might not respond to the thesis; Well, I guess that the thesis, or maybe not the thesis but the end of the first paragraph; I said it was kind of writer-based and the fourth paragraph, I thought, was really problematic [inaudible]; In the first sentence of the paragraph;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

*Textual (6)*: I thought that the only paragraph that was on point; In this paragraph, she just mentions the people without really going into it at all; The paragraphs have poor focus; I remember in that first paragraph; I said the paragraphs drift off point; The paragraphing was pretty good;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

*Textual (9)*: It is a five paragraph theme; it’s somewhat conversational and the focus for the paragraphs needs some tightening up; Like within the paragraphs I think; I just said it was five paragraph essay; I’m seeing in sentence structure and the more narrative things that are happening in the second and third paragraph (RQ 7); It is a five paragraph theme; Paragraphing is odd; This discipline stuff should belong in the next paragraph; That paragraphing I didn’t notice before;

**Point of View Shifts (14)**

110S
None

**Borderlines First Time Period**

*Textual (7)*: I said there were point of view shifts; Because I said there were point of view shifts like right at the beginning; point of view shifts; There were point of view shifts; Point of view shifts, I think were pretty strong; the you shifts in the essay; vague use of you;

**Disagreements First Time Period**
None

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

*Textual (2)*: Point of view shifts; shift to second person somewhere;
Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (5): Second person didn’t seem to be effective since the reader; Maybe goes into second person; Shifts between that and third person a little bit; Shifts between that and third person a little bit; And like how it shifts;

Prompt (4)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period

Contextual (4): It kind of strays from the prompt (RQ 7); I remember looking at and saying this is something I would have expected to see a couple of years ago with those very broad prompts where it wanders all over the place (RQ 7); I was getting that feeling that it was wandering, and this is a pretty specific prompt. That’s probably a sign of 110 (RQ 7); although it does stray from it, the prompt, I saw it, as coming back to it or related to it in some way (RQ 7);

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Questions (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (1): there were some questions which were really…whoa!

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (1): Questions weren’t effective;

Repetition (11)

110S
None
Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): That was pretty repetitive; The repetition is something I missed. I said it was repetitive but I missed that particular one; it was repetitive;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): because there’s a little bit of repetition as well that might be problematic and all together, they might need more focus;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): It was kind of repetitive; Repetition for me is kind of problem in this; there are phrases in here that are repetitive;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): I said that it was kind of repetitive and somewhat conversational; I said repetitive and some clarity issues; I noticed the repetition;
Contextual (1): That’s pretty conversational and repetitive as well, and this is someone who needs a little more focus, I think;

Semicolon (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): Semicolon; I saw the semicolon;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions (43)

110S
Textual (3): there are a lot of sentences that are awkward; I can still read the sentences; Sentence boundaries. This sentence right here;

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (14): There were odd constructions; Just a lot of the sentence constructions; This sentence here is pretty off; Sometimes I’ll write that down, and then I’ll only see it in a couple of sentences, but this is something that happens in a few paragraphs; there were problems with
sentence boundaries; the sentence structure; there was an okay sentence structure; I noticed there were sentence combining problems; the structure was there, and I think what I meant was sentence structure; And some of these sentences; there were some sentence-boundary issues; sentences tend to be a little more complex; There were some sentence boundary issues; some of those sentence-level issues; It was good sentence structure; I mean the sentences are pretty good; Contextual (1): My concern is that there are sentence boundary errors; I really thought the sentence boundary stuff was something that needed more work;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (6): I thought that the organization wasn’t always clear and that there were some sentence boundary issues; I saw some problems with sentences; there were some sentence boundary issues; I saw some problems with sentences, a couple of awkward sentences; The sentence structure is what really did it for me, is that there were some questions which were really…whoa!; I saw sentence issues throughout; In the first sentence of the paragraph;
Contextual (1): I did say there was decent sentence structure; I think the sentence-structure is alright, but this is someone who needs help with what an essay is;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (8): He goes into like how you should fall asleep, and then in the next sentence, he talks about siestas; I thought there were so many short, choppy sentences that; But she has got full sentences; The sentences are pretty good but…it’s just so disorganized; There are also some sentence boundary issues; there wasn’t big issues with sentences other than a couple of fragments I saw; I can see that because some of his sentence structure stuff as well; Some sentence boundary issues. Random; Some sentence boundaries a little bit; I said sentence level seems okay;
Contextual (4): Sentence combining is something that normally gets worked on in 110, so let’s put this 110+; Yeah. I said will need extra work on sentence variation and transitions; I did say there were some odd sentence constructions; I think that the discourse is kind of problematic that I think needs sentence combining; they could use some sentence combining work;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (6): there are some really odd constructions; There was a sentence that stuck out; those sentence level things; These sentences to me is what really put this into 110; Even just the opening sentence, “My grandma once told me”; The sorts of things I’m seeing in sentence structure and the more narrative things that are happening in the second and third paragraph (RQ 8), I’m thinking it might be a 110+; This is a weird sentence here; That [sentence] did jump out at me;

Spell Check (5)

110S
Contextual (1): considering the fact that this person even thought to run it through a spell checker or something like that;
Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): The homonym errors to me looked like spell check errors rather than entire problems with;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (3): There were all sorts of spell check; spelling check errors; I think that in conjunction with all the spelling and word check stuff, this is someone who needs 110 a little more; I can’t just write it off to a spell check problem;

Spelling (8)

110S
Textual (3): I was thinking this might be an S because, I mean there are a lot of smaller spelling errors; there’s lots of spelling errors here; there’s a lot of spelling errors;

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): spelling errors;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): spelling errors; There were several spelling errors in here; There was some spelling and word choice errors in here;
Contextual (1): I thought there were some phonetic spellings in there;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Support (3)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): the stories don’t always support the point (RQ 7); I thought some of the support was good;

Disagreements First Time Period
None
Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): I said sparse support;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Tense Shifts (3)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): there were some tense shifts;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): Tense shifts and things like that and structure, too

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): I saw tense shift;

Thesis (10)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): Main ideas weren’t always connected to thesis; And I didn’t think the thesis was clear either; I thought the thesis was decent; I was wondering what the thesis was;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): I thought that a couple of the paragraphs might not respond to the thesis; Well, I guess that the thesis, or maybe not the thesis but the end of the first paragraph;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): I don’t see a thesis in here; the lack of a thesis throughout the whole thing to me is really problematic combined with the comma splices and such. I think this is a 110; What a thesis is or something like that.
Contextual (1): This is someone’s who is going to have a lot of trouble in 111 if it’s assumed that he can kind of pick up on that [thesis];

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Thoughts (2)

110S

Contextual (1): He’s pressing his thoughts

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): unclear, poorly worded, ideas or thoughts;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Word Choice/Wordy (5)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): word choice errors in here;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): word choice errors in here; and a little wordy; I put wordy down.

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): word choice;

Writer Based (10)

110S
Contextual (3): but what I was really worried about, on a couple of these points, it seems extremely writer based; It seemed worse the second time I read over it;

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (4): I just thought it was completely writer-based. I couldn’t really piece anything together; I can go with writer-based; I said it was kind of writer-based and the fourth paragraph, I thought, was really problematic [inaudible]; In the first sentence of the paragraph;
Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (3): This is extremely narrative in style. It’s writer-based for that reason. He’s talking about himself throughout the whole thing; I thought some of the organization of thoughts were writer-based; So I saw writer-based within that;

Writing Ability of Students (9)

110S
Contextual (1): This is someone who is going to have problems;

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (6): I didn’t know if he really got the purpose of what it’s about; I didn’t know if there was enough to demonstrate that this writer was ready for 111; This is someone’s who is going to have a lot of trouble in 111 if it’s assumed that he can kind of pick up on that. I mean. This is just kind of. It’s so self-centered in some ways that to me this would say 110; this person has a bit of a problem with the boundaries or the differences between speech and writing; I’ll say 110 because I think the student would struggle in 111; It was sort of borderline for me, too, because I didn’t know if there was enough to demonstrate that this writer was ready for 111, but there wasn’t big issues with sentences other than a couple of fragments I saw;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (2): So he’s aware that some of these sort of overlap; I don’t think he got the point of what he was supposed to do;
Pair 1: 110 Frequency Codebooks

Each codebook contains the frequency that each individual criterion was invoked in placement discussions overall, in borderline discussions, and in discussions during the first half (June 12-June 22) and second half (June 26 -July 19) of the Placement Program. Frequencies are meant to be general approximations; all frequencies are rounded up to the nearest half-point; therefore, the frequencies in any given codebook do not total 100%.

**Overall**

Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions: 10%
Clarity/Readability: 8%
Paragraphs: 8%
Focus: 6.5%
Benefit/Need/Help: 5.5%
Essay Organization/Structure/Five Paragraph: 5.5%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 5%
Conversational: 5%
Argument: 4.5%
Narrative/Stories/Personal Stories/Self-Centered (RQ 7): 3.5%
Point of View Shifts: 3.5%
Fragments: 3%
Repetition: 3%
Thesis: 2%
Main Ideas/Ideas: 2%
Spelling: 2%
Comma Splices: 2%
Writer Based: 2%
Writing Ability of Writers: 2%
Homonym: 2%
Development: 1.5%
Audience/Reader-Based: 1%
Choppiness of Prose: 1%
Comma Issues: 1%
Evidence: 1%
General: 1%
Spell Check: 1%
Support: 1%
Tense Shifts: 1%
Introduction: 1%
Word Choice/Wordy: 1%
Prompt (RQ 7): 1%
Clichés: 0.5%
Enough Problems: 0.5%
Informal: 0.5%
List (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Semicolon: 0.5%
Thoughts: 0.5%
Borderlines

Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions: 11%
Focus: 11%
Essay Organization/Structure/Five Paragraph: 1< 0.5%
Paragraphs: 7%
Clarity/Readability: 6%
Benefit/Need/Help: 6%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 6%
Argument: 5%
Fragments: 4%
Conversational: 4%
Point of View Shifts: 4%
Narrative/Stories/Personal Stories/Self-Centered (RQ 7): 4%
Thesis: 3%
Homonym: 3%
Repetition: 2.5%
Writing Ability of Writers: 2.5%
Choppiness of Prose: 2%
Development: 2%
Prompt (RQ 7): 2%
Comma Issues: 1%
Audience/Reader-Based: 1%
Main Ideas/Ideas: 1%
Semicolon: 1%
Support: 1%
Word Choice/Wordy: 1%
Comma Splices: 0.5%
Informal: 0.5%
Evidence: 0.5%
Spell Check: 0.5%
List (RQ 7): 0.5%
Spelling: 0.5%
Tense Shifts: 0.5%
General: < 0.5%
Introduction: < 0.5%
Clichés: < 0.5%
Thoughts: < 0.5%
Writer Based: < 0.5%
Enough Problems: < 0.5%
First Half

Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions: 9%
Clarity/Readability: 8%
Paragraphs: 7%
Conversational: 7%
Narrative/Stories/Personal Stories/Self-Centered (RQ 7): 6%
Benefit/Need/Help: 4%
Writing Ability of Writers: 4%
Essay Organization/Structure/Five Paragraph: 4%
Argument: 3%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 3%
Point of View Shifts: 3%
Repetition: 3%
Word Choice/Wordy: 2%
Fragments: 2%
Spelling: 2%
Thesis: 2%
Comma Splices: 2%
Prompt (RQ 7): 2%
Choppiness of Prose: 1.5%
Development: 1.5%
Spell Check: 1.5%
General: 1.5%
Main Ideas/Ideas: 1%
Evidence: 1%
Informal: 1%
Tense Shifts: 1%
Focus: 0.5%
Homonym: 0.5%
Writer Based: 0.5%
Audience/Reader-Based: 0.5%
Support: 0.5%
List (RQ 7): 0.5%
Comma Issues: < 0.5%
Introduction: < 0.5%
Semicolon: < 0.5%
Clichés: < 0.5%
Enough Problems: < 0.5%
Thoughts: < 0.5%
Second Half

Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions: 9%
Clarity/Readability: 8%
Benefit/Need/Help: 7%
Conversational: 7%
Paragraphs: 7%
Argument: 6%
Narrative/Stories/Personal Stories/Self-Centered (RQ 7): 6%
Essay Organization/Structure/Five Paragraph: 4.5%
Writing Ability of Writers: 4%
Focus: 3.5%
Repetition: 3.5%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 3%
Comma Splices: 2.5%
Fragments: 2.5%
Prompt (RQ 7): 2%
Thesis: 2%
Spelling: 2%
Word Choice/Wordy: 2%
Comma Issues: 1.5%
Development: 1.5%
General: 1.5%
Spell Check: 1.5%
Writer Based: 1.5%
Evidence: 1%
Informal: 1%
Main Ideas/Ideas: 1%
Tense Shifts: 1%
Audience/Reader-Based: 0.5%
Homonym: 0.5%
Choppiness of Prose: 0.5%
Point of View Shifts: 0.5%
Support: 0.5%
List (RQ 7): 0.5%
Clichés: < 0.5%
Enough Problems: < 0.5%
Introduction: < 0.5%
Semicolon: < 0.5%
Thoughts: < 0.5%
110S

Sentence Structure/Sentence Construction: 19%
Spelling: 19%
Enough Problems: 12%
Paragraphs: 6%
Writing Ability of Students: 6%
Spell Check: 6%
Thoughts: 6%
Clarity/Readability: 6%
Pair 1
111 Placement Criteria Glossary

The abbreviation “T” refers to the textual definition of each criterion, and the abbreviation “C” refers to the contextual definition of each criterion. The abbreviation “RQ” refers to particular supporting research questions in the study.

**Academic Discourse:** C. Writers demonstrate an understanding of academic language though the academic language is sometimes exaggerated.

**Argument:** T. The argumentative structure is mostly clear but not particularly strong. C. Writers could benefit from learning how to compose argumentative essays.

**Article/Source/Quotes:** C. Writers demonstrate an ability to integrate sources and quotes into their essays.

**Assumptions:** C. Writers make too many assumptions in their essays.

**Audience/Reader-Based:** T. Essays demonstrate or do not demonstrate awareness of an audience or readers. C. Writers are overly academic because they visualize English educators as the primary audience. Writers are aware or unaware of their readers and/or may benefit from more practice with audience.

**Awkward/Stilted:** T. Essay components are awkward or stilted.

**Benefit/Need/Help/Extra Time:** C. Writers may benefit from the extra time in an English 110 or with an English 110 instructor to work on issues such as audience, academic language, or development.

**Choppiness of Prose:** T. Sentences are repeatedly short and choppy. C. Writers’ choppy prose may keep them out of English 112.

**Clarity/Readability:** T. Some essays are difficult to read due to factors such as unclear main ideas or points, sentences, theses, sentence structure, paragraphs, structure, and words. However, essays are easy to read due to factors such as clear content, prose, examples, and paragraphs.

**Clunkiness:** T. Essays contain awkward prose.

**Comma Issues:** T. Essays contain comma errors, misplaced commas, or not enough commas.

**Comma Splices:** T. Essays contain comma splices: two independent clauses joined by a comma.

**Comparing Essays:** C. Evaluators compare essays to previous essays in making placement decisions.
Conversational/Informal: T. The writing is informal and conversational. C. Writers may benefit from English 111 because of conversational prose.

Counterargument: T. Essays contain opposing viewpoints or arguments. C. Writers establish their ethos by addressing opposing viewpoints.

Creativity: T. Essays contain creative elements. C. Writers are trying to be too creative in their essays.

Critical Thinking/Thoughts: C. Writers demonstrate evidence of critical thinking at times.

Curricular Exemplars: C. Writers address curricular exemplars or model essays of the writing program, such as problems and solutions.

Development: T. Essays demonstrate clear development and/or lack of development. C. Writers did not put forth enough effort to develop their essays or may need extra time in class to learn development skills.

Enough Problems: T. Writers essays did not contain enough problems to warrant a 110 placement.

ESL (RQ 7): C. Students may be ESL writers.

Essay/Essay Organization/Essay Structure/Five Paragraph: T. Essays are poorly organized, adequately organized, or well-organized. C. Writers are aware or unaware of argumentative structure or needs help with structure in English 111.

Evidence: T. The essays’ claims are not developed with evidence or the evidence is narrative.

Examples (RQ 8): T. The essays’ examples are exclusively narrative or based entirely on personal experiences.

Flows: T. Essays demonstrate movement.

Focus: T. The essays’ focus wanders, drifts, and shifts within paragraphs. Essays lack focus and are not on point. C. Writers are able to maintain focus within their essays.

Fragments: T. Essays contain sentence fragments or incomplete sentences. C. Writers create fragments while combining sentences.

Grammatical Errors: T. Essays contain grammatical errors.

Humor/Sarcasm: C. Writers attempt sarcasm and/or humor in their essays.

Iffy: T. Certain parts of the essays are questionable.
Initiative/Effort: C. Writers demonstrate initiative or lack of effort in their essays.

Introduction/Conclusion/Set Up/End: T. Essays contain weak, adequate, strong, unclear, focused, unfocused, repetitive, choppy, and/or awkward introductory or concluding paragraphs.

Logic: T. Essays contain logical fallacies, which demonstrate lack of audience awareness. C. Writers may need to work on logic in English 111.

Main Ideas/Supporting Ideas/Main Points/Supporting Points: T. The main ideas, supporting ideas or points, and/or main points are clear, unclear, sophisticated, illogical, unfocused, and/or organized. C. Writers’ presentation of main points are intentional, and writers need help composing argumentative points.

Metadiscourse/Transitions: T. Overall, the essays lack effective metadiscourse and transitions-organizational language that helps the audience/reader recognize the connections among the essays’ paragraphs and sentences. However, strong metadiscourse and transitions are noted. C. Writers need further work with metadiscourse/transitions.

Misuse of Terms: T. Terms are misused.

Narrative/Personal: T. The essays’ main points are supported by strong narrative. Essay support is narrative and based upon personal experiences and examples. C. Writers will not use narrative in the writing classes because the writing program does not emphasize narrative.

On Topic (RQ 7): T. Essays are on topic but off thesis, and paragraphs are related to the essays’ topics.

Padded: T. Essays contain repetitive information that increases their length.

Paragraphs: T. Essay paragraphs demonstrate various qualities, such as poor or strong focus, good organization, choppy prose, clarity, connection with topic, narration, and repetition. Overall, the weak and/or strong qualities of paragraphs are emphasized. C. Writers may be able to work on paragraph issues in English 111.

Point of View Shifts/Shifts in Number: T. Essays contain point of view shifts and shifts in number.

Prompt (RQ 7): C. Essays focus on and/or do not focus on the online writing placement test’s instructions.

Question Marks/End Punctuation: T. Essays lack question marks or contain punctuation errors.

Repetition: T. Essays contain repetitive components, such as sentences and conclusions.
**Run Ons:** T. Essays contain run on sentences--independent clauses fused together without appropriate punctuation.

**Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions/Sentence Boundaries:** T. Essays contain unclear, repetitive, strong, writer-based, choppy, wordy, unfocused, elaborate, good, vague, sophisticated, odd, and/or decent sentences and sentence constructions. Essays contain sentence boundary errors and lack of sentence variety. C. Writers need assistance combining sentences and recognizing sentence boundaries in class.

**Sophistication:** T. Sentences and vocabulary are sophisticated.

**Spell Check:** C. Writers’ use of their word processors’ spell check function causes them/does not cause them to produce spelling and homonym errors, and writers rely heavily/do not rely heavily upon the spell check.

**Spelling:** T. Essays contain spelling errors.

**Stream of Thought:** C. Essays demonstrate stream of thought or stream-of-consciousness writing.

**Style:** T. Essays demonstrate strong writing style. C. Writers establish their ethos stylistically.

**Support:** T. Essays contain good and/or sparse support to support the main points, which may include narrative examples.

**Thesis:** T. The essays’ theses, or main points, are unclear, adequate, vague, informal, and/or nonexistent. C. Writers did not follow through on the thesis or copied the instructions from the online writing placement test.

**Vocabulary:** T. The vocabulary is strong or sophisticated.

**Weird:** T. The essays’ conclusions or sentence constructions are weird. C. Writers create weird sentences as a result of sentence combining.

**Word Choice/Usage:** T. Essays contain word choice errors. C. Writers use words with an academic audience in mind.

**Writer Based:** T. Essays are writer based; writers utilize narrative, self-centered, stream-of-consciousness strategies in writing the essays. C. Writers intentionally use writer-based language.

**Writing Ability/Potential of Writers:** C. Writers will succeed or not succeed in English 111.
Pair 1

111 Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples

The following “Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples” corresponds to the preceding “Placement Criteria Glossary.” The in vivo examples for each criterion were studied, criterion-by-criterion, and the preceding glossary containing textual and/or contextual definitions of each individual criterion was written. Numbers in parenthesis note the number of times each criterion was invoked overall and according to the following categories: “Borderlines First Time Period,” “Disagreements First Time Period,” “Borderlines Second Time Period,” and “Disagreements Second Time Period.”

Academic Discourse (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period

Contextual (3): I thought she had a good grasp of academic language; an understanding of academic discourse or academic language; it kind of rubbed me the wrong way I guess—that it was trying too hard to be academic in some ways;

Argument (12)

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (1): the argument makes sense to me;
Contextual (4): It is argumentative; could benefit from some approaches to argumentation in 111; this is someone who knows he’s writing an argumentative essay; I said she needed a lot of work on how to present an argument; it’s kind of hard to figure out what she’s supposed to argue

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (3): in terms of what the program is looking for--there are arguments; I mean I didn’t see where the argument was when he got into family business; I mean, the sentence structure is good, but the overall argument is kind of… I don’t know. It didn’t really leap out at me;
Contextual (1): Like the one concern I had was that maybe she only got to her argument here unless she took a different approach to it;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None
**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Contextual (3):** I said needs work on developing an argument; I thought that was almost wasn’t as much part of her argument. I thought her argument was strong throughout; I don’t really see them [paragraphs] doing much for an argument; The point got lost for me, and I thought he just needed major work with composing an argument;

**Article/Source/Quotes (7)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**
None

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (2):** I saw a good integration of quotes and a sophisticated style; It ends with the quote;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Contextual (3):** she’s uses wikipedia; she’s still integrating the source there; can integrate some quotation;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Contextual (2):** was able to integrate the article; I thought she had a good grasp of academic language, and integrating sources;

**Assumptions (2)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Contextual (1):** there were some assumptions throughout here

**Disagreements First Time Period**
None

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Contextual (1):** There’s too much here that’s being assumed [by student];

**Disagreements Second Time Period**
None

**Audience/Reader-Based (8)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**
None

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (3):** that to me is more of an obvious move towards audience awareness. Like the sub points weren’t set up logically or so that they could account for a reader; I thought that her audience was so unclear that I couldn’t understand what she was saying a lot of the time or I thought her points got lost;
Contextual (3): Now that I’m thinking about it, he might benefit from a little more focus on audience; Is the audience always going to understand what he means?; He knows that he has an audience;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): so he doesn’t really have an audience;
Contextual (1): writer demonstrates audience awareness

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (1): I guess--that it was trying too hard to be academic in some ways, and like I said, in terms of an audience awareness thing, I don’t know if it’s really indicative of that because the audience in her mind is English people who are looking for really high structures and words and things like that;

Awkward/Stilted (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): I mean there were just stuff like that that sounded awkward to me; it’s kind of stilted;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Benefit/Need/Help/Extra Time (10)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): I said he probably would benefit from 111

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (4): Now that I’m thinking about it, he might benefit from a little more focus on audience; is this guy going to benefit from 111 because this is very conversational; is this guy going to benefit from 111 because this is very conversational; Is this someone who’s gonna need the extra time one on one to develop this?; That needs to be clarified, but I think that’s something that gets worked on in 111;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (4): I just wasn’t sure how much extra help he needed; I thought it was weak, but I don’t know if the student could get much from 110; Is this someone who’s going to need 111?; I thought it was weak, but I don’t know if the student could get much from 110;
Clarity/Readability (46)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (10): I kind of had to work to figure out the main ideas at times; I guess they [points] relate to the main idea; the sentences aren’t clear; They’re not clear by any sense, but that was what I was worried about; It’s short but it was clear; It’s overall clear; some unclear sentences content-wise; It follows fairly clear line of thought; The thesis wasn’t clear until the end; I thought it was hard to follow; those were hard to follow, like what they were doing exactly; Contextual (1): it’s kind of hard to figure out what she’s supposed to argue;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (14): Her point wasn’t so clear there, I didn’t think. I would say 111; And it seemed clear when I was reading it; I thought that the thesis was a little unclear; the sentence structure is unclear; I said that the main point wasn’t entirely clear; That was a little unclear; Thought it was well-developed, clear; This is, to me, pretty clearly organized because it’s a five paragraph theme in some cases; This is pretty clearly organized; I didn’t understand how some of her analogies fit in either; I said it was conversational to the point where her point was getting lost for me (RQ 7); The point was getting lost for me; For me, a lot of her points got lost because of; Is the audience always going to understand what he means?: I thought that her audience was so unclear that I couldn’t understand what she was saying a lot of the time or I thought her points got lost;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (9); I thought the examples were really clear; The essay was pretty clear; I just had a hard time reading it, so I don’t know if it was just me; I had a hard time reading this, too; I could understand more down here; when it gets into her personal experience, I don’t know how that

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): And I said the conclusion was choppy; I said choppy at times; The short choppy sentences really worried me;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): I thought that there were choppy sentences;
relates (RQ 7); I don’t know what he means by that; The paragraphs are off, but you put them together, and that’s when it gets, What are you talking about?; The second paragraph I could not understand. I didn’t know where things were coming from; I said I saw clear paragraphs; ‘Cause it took me back a second, and then I kind of got what he meant;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (12): But I don’t know. I kept, even when rereading this, I keep having a problem finding a fairly clear structure; I think it’s making more sense as I’m reading through it again; And I think I did more on my first reading than now; After reading it again, I can make sense of it, but I think; seeing commas where they weren’t supposed to be just threw my read of it off; I had trouble understanding what she was saying throughout, I think; I had trouble understanding some of her wordier sentences at the beginning; I can understand the sentence structure and the vocabulary part; Like I can follow it; I understand that; I could understand what they were saying; While this is really creative, [Reads quickly from essay], I can see why people would get confused; is kind of iffy at times although I can kind of figure out what it means;

Clunky/Clunkiness (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): That’s pretty clunky; But I think I did hear that clunkiness throughout;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Comma Issues (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): some comma problems within there;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): I can see a lot of missing commas and stuff, but for me, commas are not, it’s a problem; a lack of commas;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): There should be a colon there or a comma or something like that, but that still makes sense; seeing commas where they weren’t supposed to be just threw my read of it off; Contextual (1): Just should have put a comma there;
Comma Splices (5)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): I noticed that there were a couple of comma splices;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): there’s a comma splice there;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): comma splices; This is a comma splice here. It makes sense, but the construction there is just a little weird;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): That’s a comma splice;

Comparing Essays (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): I think it’s probably better than a 111 I was looking at;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (2): it wasn’t as completely unfocused as the previous one; I placed a lot of them pretty low in the other ones

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Conversational/Informal (5)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (2): I said it was conversational to the point where her point was getting lost for me; is this guy going to benefit from 111 because this is very conversational;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): I thought there were some informal aspects to it; It’s a little conversational; it is also a little conversational;
Counterargument (5)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): contains counterargument in the third paragraph; I said there was a use of counterargument in here; So you see this as a counterargument; He’s got a counterargument and a rebuttal in here; the fact that there’s a counterargument in here;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): he’s setting up sort of an ethos here and starting to deal with concerns and counterarguments;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Creativity (5)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): said it tends to be creative;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): I mean there were things like that were, in a sense, were creative but didn’t quite;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): I can see where the creativity might come into play;
Contextual (1): I thought there was some creativity like he was trying to do too much. It was maybe sprinkled within that;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): While this is really creative, [Reads quickly from essay], I can see why people would get confused.

Critical Thinking/Thoughts (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None
Disagreements Second Time Period

Contextual (2): there was evidence of critical thinking; I thought the order of thoughts were kind of backwards at times;

Curricular Exemplars (1)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period

Contextual (1): she says I think a good solution to this problem even though I don’t think the solution is really well supported (RQ 8);

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Development (15)

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (5): I said it lacked some ideas in development; The development isn’t too bad; It wasn’t well-developed; It’s short but it was clear;

Contextual (1): Just the inability to get in and out of the essay and it was kind of sparse;

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (5): I said that the claims weren’t backed up with evidence, and it wasn’t developed; To me it’s a problem with development; But I was sort of leaning towards, because of that lack of development within the essay, I was leaning towards a 111+; I thought that it was developed and the sentences were pretty sophisticated; Thought it was well-developed, clear; I said that the claims weren’t backed up with evidence, and it wasn’t developed;

Contextual (1): Is this someone who’s gonna need the extra time one on one to develop this?;

Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (1): each point is only developed so much;

Contextual (1): It was very short and very weak, but what was there, I don’t think indicates 110. I think it indicates someone who didn’t put any effort into it;

Disagreements Second Time Period

Contextual (1): I said needs work on developing an argument;
Enough Problems (3)

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (3): I don’t think there was enough to probably enough to make it a 110; I don’t think it was enough to put it in [110]; There’s not enough to really put it over to 112; Some people might think that’s not enough;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

ESL (1)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period

Contextual (1): I thought this might be ESL. I put 111- cause I just say a lot of misuse of terms (RQ 7);

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None


Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (10): It’s a little too jumbled for me to put it in 112; I said the organization was weak; I thought there was a decent organization; I said he had decent organization; It was really good organization, but I just thought that from paragraph to paragraph to paragraph; but the organization seemed a little jumbled; I think that the organization is pretty good; It still seemed a little organizational; 'Cause the rest of the stuff is fairly well organized; I saw them [narratives] organized with the main point (RQ 7);

Contextual (2): Just the inability to get in and out of the essay and it was kind of sparse; It seems to be an essay even if he doesn’t get in and out well; I thought the essay got better; this is someone who knows he’s writing an argumentative essay;
**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (18):** the support and the organization was really strong; I think the support and the organization for this is pretty strong; very weak organization; Organization’s bad. I’m not going to argue that; I also had poor organization; I think the organization here is that in the second paragraph, he’s talking about himself; To me it’s a problem with development and organization; her overall organization, her organization was there but the way she grouped paragraphs was a little odd, too, I thought as well; I think the organization is okay like in terms of the paragraph breaks; the decent organization; there was decent support and organization; early organized because it’s a five paragraph theme in some cases; This is pretty clearly organized; the way she grouped paragraphs was a little odd, too, I thought as well; there’s a kind of structure going on; Organization’s bad. I’m not going to argue that; pretty clearly organized because it’s a five paragraph theme in some cases; Does she rely on the three-idea format with how she sets up her paragraphs and stuff?

**Contextual (1):** A 112 essay is going to be pretty solid all the way through;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (2):** I thought that there was decent organization; It’s a five paragraph theme

**Contextual (2):** I think that the paragraph organization is pretty decent; I think this person needs structure. You can get that in 111;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

None

**Evidence (3)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

None

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (1):** I said that the claims weren’t backed up with evidence, and it wasn’t developed;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

None

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (2):** The evidence is narrative (RQ 7); The evidence is narrative, and he needs some more inclusive examples, but even then, his examples are fairly (RQ 7);

**Examples (8)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

None
Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): The examples are usually narrative (RQ 7); So I think it might need a little more in the classical support stuff;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (4): I thought it had really good examples in it [essay]; I thought the examples were really clear; she gives personal examples and then kinds of moves on to (RQ 7); personal examples worked well, but some of them didn’t for me, I think (RQ 7); I thought it relied on previous experience a lot with examples (RQ 7); when it gets into her personal experience, I don’t know how that relates (RQ 7);

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): she has a lot of good examples as to why this is happening, and then college teaches us many lessons; The evidence is narrative, and he needs some more inclusive examples, but even then, his examples are fairly (RQ 7);

Flows (4)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): I said flows nicely; It flowed well and everything;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): I don’t know how it flowed either; But it still doesn’t flow the way I expect a 112 paper;

Focus (23)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (8): wanders on the topic; drifts from main idea in other paragraphs near the end; I thought the focus moved away from the parent; lack of focus; paragraph five was particularly unfocused; it stays on focus; It’s kind of shift in focus; there’s lack of focus in some of the paragraphs;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (7): the focus in some of the paragraphs was kind of iffy; I see some of the lack of focus; I saw lack of focus; main ideas were kind of unfocused; there was a lack of focus in some paragraphs; it really seemed to lack focus early on; I said paragraph focus is good but she could combine some of the paragraphs;
Contextual (1): he might benefit from a little more focus on audience;
Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (6): I said basically paragraph three seemed to get off focus; it wasn’t as completely unfocused as the previous one; It’s not on point; It really drifts a lot. It’s not on point; It drifts;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (1): was able to integrate the article and doesn’t lose focus;

Fragments (8)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): I saw fragments; fragments; Where are the fragments?; I just put down fragment for one I saw right away;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): I saw like intentional fragments; They might technically be fragments in some ways, but realistically, I think that’s not a huge issue in terms of sentence boundaries; Contextual (1): The problems with the fragments usually come in the weird sentences when he is trying to combine sentences like here;

Grammatical Errors (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): I said slight grammatical errors; Well, there are errors; I mean like that that’s grammatical; But they’re [errors] not as jarring as they seemed to be when I first read it;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Humor/Sarcasm (4)

Borderlines First Time Period
None
Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): He was trying to make a joke or trying to;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (3): You know it’s sort of a sarcastic afterthought; I didn’t see any sarcasm; Here it’s to show, not sarcasm;

Iffy (5)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (2): Once she starts talking about her research paper, that’s when it starts getting to be a little iffy; the focus in some of the paragraphs was kind of iffy;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): It was a real iffy borderline for me

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): The first part was really iffy; it fairly clear is kind of iffy at times although I can kind of figure out what it means.

Initiative/Effort (2)

Borderlines First Time Period

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): She takes initiative by saying by saying by interviewing a friend, but at the same time;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): It was very short and very weak, but what was there, I don’t think indicates 110. I think it indicates someone who didn’t put any effort into it

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Introduction/Conclusion/Set Up/End (21)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (8): the conclusion is not the best; With the conclusion and stuff, it could got 111+; I thought the conclusion was really strong; And even in the end, it seemed like her conclusion, I
don’t know; Her conclusion was weak; the introduction and the conclusion are really weak; the first paragraph really tries to get someone’s attention; I thought the first two paragraphs were problematic;

Disagreements First Time Period  
**Textual (7):** I thought the conclusion was a little weird. It ends with the quote. It works at the beginning but not at the end; I saw that they [introduction and conclusion] were both pretty weak; With the thesis, conclusion, and transitions, they were just adequate; Near the end here--[reads from essay]--it’s a little confusing; And then at the end, she says I think a good solution to this problem even though I don’t think the solution is really well supported (RQ 8); I could see she doesn’t have a good in and out strategy; I thought it just kind of jumped into stuff. I mean I don’t think anything was really set up, you know;

Borderlines Second Time Period  
**Textual (5):** It was a little repetitive, but that was mostly in the conclusion, and that’s kind of normal; It also got repetitive near the end; And I said the conclusion was choppy; The conclusion doesn’t really tie everything together; Even in the conclusion, that’s not horribly clear.

Disagreements Second Time Period  
**Textual (1):** For me the introduction was kind of incoherent; there was enough ideas in the introduction;

**Logic (3)**

Borderlines First Time Period  
**Textual (1):** logical fallacies  
**Contextual (1):** logic and such is something you can work on later or in 111;

Disagreements First Time Period  
**Textual (1):** Like the sub points weren’t set up logically or so that they could account for a reader;

Borderlines Second Time Period  
None

Disagreements Second Time Period  
None

**Main Ideas/Supporting Ideas/Main Points/Supporting Points (24)**

Borderlines First Time Period  
**Textual (9):** sophisticated analysis of these ideas; drifts from main idea in other paragraphs near the end; I kind of had to work to figure out the main ideas at times; some ideas in development; I didn’t think the main ideas were that strong; Like did you see the main points in the narratives? (RQ 7); I saw them [narratives] organized with the main point; So do you think that her main
point is that more people need to prioritize like this sentence maybe here?; I guess they [points] relate to the main idea;

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (9): I said that the main point wasn’t entirely clear; Her point wasn’t so clear there, I didn’t think. I would say 111; I said it was conversational to the point where her point was getting lost for me; The point was getting lost for me; For me, a lot of her points got lost because of; Like the sub points weren’t set up logically or so that they could account for a reader; I said that the main point wasn’t entirely clear; a lot of the time or I thought her points got lost; it was lacking in ideas because there were two supporting paragraphs but, I thought, what he had there was pretty good; main ideas were kind of unfocused; Does she rely on the three-idea format with how she sets up her paragraphs and stuff?

Contextual (2): the couple points that I could point out seem to me to be more intentional than what you might see because this doesn’t seem to be quite as writer based as a 110, I think; it wasn’t always on point; The point got lost for me, and I thought he just needed major work with composing an argument;

Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (1): I said main point is hard to find if there is one;

Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (3): and trying to find the main ideas having it fairly clear is kind of iffy at times although I can kind of figure out what it means; the idea of oh, and not to mention high interest rates; there was enough ideas in the introduction to have a whole [inaudible];

Metadiscourse/Transitions (30)

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (5): I said that there was some metadiscourse; metadiscourse was a little weak; the killer was weak metadiscourse; the metadiscourse isn’t there with that; There’s some weak metadiscourse in here; Said it needed metadiscourse work; there’s metadiscourse; Those are small [metadiscourse]; there were some transition issues;

Contextual (1): He needs metadiscourse work;

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (15): I said the metadiscourse was weak; I just thought metadiscourse problems and, you know, transitions and stuff like that; there were metadiscourse problems; there was really weak metadiscourse; I said there were weak metadiscourse and transitions; I thought the metadiscourse was a little weak; there were metadiscourse problems; there were some metadiscourse issues; It must have been the metadiscourse I thought was really strong; I thought some of the transitions were lacking; transitions and stuff like; the transitions were weak; transitions; I mean [transitions] the next, another, a final; Paragraph transitions were probably lacking and maybe tone because he says but;

Contextual (2): I can go 111+, but for me there isn’t enough sophistication and metadiscourse in order to warrant 112; Metadiscourse and transitions are normally a 111;
Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (4): I said it had weak transitions and metadiscourse; I didn’t know if the metadiscourse was that strong; 'Cause I think the metadiscourse is pretty strong here; See for me the problem was the fact that were some issues with transitions and this was kind of repetitive if you take a look at the second paragraph here in which he starts talking about the freedom. It seems like a lot of this can be cut out;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): I’m having a problem with transitions; You know, here well is meant to be a corrective part rather than a transition from one sentence to another;
Contextual (1): But those don’t really concern me so much because those are still transitions, and while he might be using them incorrectly;

Misuse of Terms (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): the terms were oddly defined; I just say a lot of misuse of terms; Maybe I’m not seeing some of those misuses as much;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Narrative/Personal (19)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): everything about her (RQ 7); Like did you see the main points in the narratives? (RQ 7); I saw them [narratives] organized with the main point (RQ 7)
Contextual (1): We don’t do narrative here [in GSW], so that’s just me (RQ 7);

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (6): I saw the narrative stuff as well, and I thought there really was a good sentence structure, but there was an awful lot of himself (RQ 7); The examples are usually narrative (RQ 7); I said it’s strong narrative approach (RQ 7); But I saw that too with the narrative. It was a little too much (RQ 7); I said it was repetitive and it was kind of narrative (RQ 7); I think it was more when it got into her personal issues and like some of the stuff like [reads quickly from essay] (RQ 7); Then most of her support is the story (RQ 7);

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (5): she gives personal examples and then kinds of moves on to (RQ 7); personal examples worked well, but some of them didn’t for me, I think (RQ 7); I thought it relied on previous experience a lot with examples (RQ 7); they were simple sentences for the most part,
but some of that might have been the narrative style of it (RQ 7); This is very narrative and pretty self-centered (RQ 7);

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (4):** This is a narrative (RQ 7); I think that the third paragraph. I think it’s kind of narrative; The evidence is narrative, and he needs some more inclusive examples, but even then, his examples are fairly (RQ 7); It’s narrative certainly, but I don’t think it’s disorganized (RQ 7); They are from his point of view, and they are from his life. But you know, this is three friends of his (RQ 7);

**On Topic (2)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**
None

**Disagreements First Time Period**
None

**Borderlines Second Time Period**
None

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (2):** I put something down that said off thesis but on topic; The first is that these paragraphs, the second and third paragraphs, are related to the topic;

**Padded (2)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**
None

**Disagreements First Time Period**
None

**Borderlines Second Time Period**
None

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (2):** I mean this is fairly padded; It seems kind of padded, too;

**Paragraphs (47)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (9):** It occasionally drifts from main idea in other paragraphs near the end; I thought paragraph five was particularly unfocused; There was like that initial sentence in that paragraph, paragraph five; Paragraphs were loosely connected; contains counterargument in the third paragraph; paragraph four is weak and doesn’t; It was really good organization, but I just thought
that from paragraph to paragraph to paragraph; the first paragraph really tries to get someone’s attention; I thought the first two paragraphs were problematic; paragraph three, I didn’t think was very good; lack of focus in some of the paragraphs;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (15):** the focus in some of the paragraphs was kind of iffy; I think the organization here is that in the second paragraph, he’s talking about himself; And then the third paragraph, he’s referring to other people; the way she grouped paragraphs was a little odd, too, I thought as well; I think the organization is okay like in terms of the paragraph breaks; there were two supporting paragraphs; Some things in this paragraph. [Reads from essay]. I think it’s lacking some support there; there was a lack of focus in some paragraphs; I said even though it’s three paragraphs, I thought that it was developed and the sentences were pretty sophisticated; Does she rely on the three-idea format with how she sets up her paragraphs and stuff?; I thought the paragraphs were strong; Paragraph transitions were probably lacking and maybe tone because he says but; Like if you take a look at the first paragraph, it’s kind of choppy; I said paragraph focus is good but she could combine some of the paragraphs; This is, to me, pretty clearly organized because it’s a five paragraph theme in some cases;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (11):** the paragraphs were pretty decent; I said basically paragraph three seemed to get off focus; if you take a look at the second paragraph here in which he starts talking about the freedom. It seems like a lot of this can be cut out; And this paragraph is talking about students. This paragraph is talking about parents; I didn’t see the students in the second paragraph, but I did see it in the third; the paragraph organization is pretty decent; The paragraphs are off, but you put them together, and that’s when it gets, What are you talking about?; I can go 111- for that because of those paragraphs; The second paragraph I could not understand. I didn’t know where things were coming from; That writer-based part in the second paragraph didn’t fit with the rest of it either; I said I saw clear paragraphs;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (11):** I can see here in the beginning of paragraph three, that’s a little weaker. I think paragraph two, this last sentence; I think these last two paragraphs were pretty strong; I thought that this paragraph wasn’t that strong, the second one. I thought that was almost wasn’t as much part of her argument; The paragraph work is pretty decent; The strongest sentence, her thesis, is this first part of her last paragraph; The first is that these paragraphs, the second and third paragraphs, are related to the topic, but I don’t really see them [paragraphs] doing much for an argument; this second paragraph here is all about--students don’t have any idea what it means to be independent--and then she has a lot of good examples as to why this is happening, and then college teaches us many lessons; She does down here in the last paragraph. The other one that I’m concerned about is the fact that while this [paragraph] is a pretty complex in terms of structure it seems inflated to me; I thought this paragraph was pretty weak; I think that the third paragraph I think it’s kind of narrative (RQ 7); even in the second paragraph, this is getting a little repetitive;

**Contextual (1):** Do you think a sentence like this, like the first sentence in that paragraph can get worked out in 111?;
Point of View Shifts/Shifts in Number (5)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): shifts in number;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (2): I saw a kind of shift; There was as shifting you;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (2): I saw a kind of shift; There was as shifting you;

Prompt (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): ripping off the prompt (RQ 7);

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): I didn’t think it addressed the prompt quite as well as it could have (RQ 7);

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (4): She doesn’t answer the prompt? (RQ 7); It answers the prompt, deals with some of this, and then he says, First of all, I can tell most students are prepared (RQ 7); the question is what factors explain this? (RQ 7); I didn’t look at the question. So I was looking at it as what she had there. So I guess I can understand why it would be a 111 essay then (RQ 7);

Question Marks/End Punctuation (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): omission of question marks;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): end punctuation errors;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Repetition (22)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): There was some repetition; it [sentences] was pretty repetitive; It seemed really repetitive to me;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (7): I said it was repetitive; I said it’s somewhat repetitive; I said it was kind of repetitive; I can hear a little bit of repetition and things like that; it was repetitive; I thought it was repetitive; Like that’s repetition there that’s happening;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (8): It was a little repetitive, but that was mostly in the conclusion, and that’s kind of normal; this was kind of repetitive if you take a look at the second paragraph here in which he starts talking about the freedom; I said it was repetitive; like it was kind of repetitive; It also got repetitive near the end; I thought it got repetitive; it was repetitive;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (4): I think I had real problems because this is really repetitive; in the second paragraph, this is getting a little repetitive; I did say it was somewhat repetitive;

Run Ons (4)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): I think I meant to put run on probably;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): there were a lot of run ons, I thought; I thought that was pretty awkward if not a run on;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): run ons

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions/Sentence Boundaries (67)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (16): the sentences aren’t clear; decent sentence structure though; There was some repetition, there were sentence structures at times, but they were not overly difficult; Some sentences really stuck out for me; I didn’t think the sentences were quite that bad; like that initial sentence in that paragraph, paragraph five; It’s good sentences, and things like that, just a little more structure is needed; train-of-thought sentences, kind of writer-based; So do you think that her main point is that more people need to prioritize like this sentence maybe here?; I thought that there were choppy sentences; I saw some problem sentences; the sentence structure was
pretty good; a lot of sentences beginning with so; the sentence structure; The sentence structure for me is something that’s a little more indicative, though; it [sentence] was pretty repetitive; Contextual (2): So I think that her not knowing how to use however rather than not knowing what a sentence boundary is; This is someone who might have a bit of trouble;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (17): I saw some shift in voice with that one and some problems with sentence construction; These are some pretty elaborate sentences; I thought there really was a good sentence structure; I saw a lot of sentence-level problems; The first couple of sentences; And I can see problems with the sentence level; I just saw some of those sentence-level things; That a pretty technically intricate sentence; And in the next sentence, she uses the semicolon correctly; I didn’t see the sentence structure; I was thinking it might have been 110 as well, but without more sentence-level problems; I said that the sentence structure was odd; I don’t think the sentences were quite as I thought; I saw some sentence-level issues and some vagueness as well; sentence-boundary issues; the sentences were pretty sophisticated; the sentence structure is good; the sentence structure is unclear, and there are a lot of strange constructions in terms of how Contextual (5): she’s putting sentences together; I can see your point with the sentences and all. That’s [sentences] something that might need to get worked out; I don’t see so many extra problems they might have in terms of sentence structure; I thought there were some sentence combining problems; Like those sentences together could be combined especially the second and third ones;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (9): odd [sentence] constructions, but those seemed to missing conjunctions; It makes sense, but the construction there is just a little weird; These are more complex [sentence] constructions; they were simple sentences for the most part, but some of that might have been the narrative style of it (RQ 7); There were some odd sentence constructions; It’s not on point, but I didn’t see a lot of the sentence-level errors; I didn’t see the sentence-level errors; But in terms of sentence construction; The short choppy sentences really worried me;
Contextual (1): I think that’s why I was leaning towards 110 because this is someone who needs sentence combining;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (19): I saw some sentences like that, too. I don’t if they were mismatched constructions; I thought there was sentence boundary issues in the beginning more than the end; I think paragraph two, this last sentence; Maybe it was the sentence structures. I said nothing to me like stood out putting a student into 110; the sentence structure is pretty decent; It was probably the sentence structure; Like this sentence here; Which sentence?; The strongest sentence, her thesis, is this first part of her last paragraph; I had trouble understanding some of her wordier sentences at the beginning; I saw some sentences like that, too; you mentioned a couple of the weird sentence structures; this is a sentence boundary issue, but this is a pretty sophisticated sentence boundary issue; here well is meant to be a corrective part rather than a transition from one sentence to another; I can understand the sentence structure and the vocabulary part, but there a couple of things that concern me about this as well; some sentence boundaries. And I think it was mainly the sentences that started out with but and so jumped out
at me; I think that’s not a huge issue in terms of sentence boundaries; It’s still a complete sentence; I saw some of the sentence boundary things;

**Contextual (3):** Do you think a sentence like this, like the first sentence in that paragraph can get worked out in 111?; don’t see the kind of difficulties sentence-wise or structure-wise that I think that a 110 might have; The problems with the fragments usually come in the weird sentences when he is trying to combine sentences like here;

**Sophistication (7)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**
None

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (4):** I saw a good integration of quotes and a sophisticated style; the sentences were pretty sophisticated; I thought it was pretty sophisticated; there isn’t enough sophistication and metadiscourse in order to warrant 112;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**
None

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (3):** some of these errors are more sophisticated errors; this is a pretty sophisticated sentence boundary issue; I think that a 110 might have ‘cause even though they use well and oh--those are verbal cues--but at the same times, these are somewhat sophisticated ones; I think it’s a little more sophisticated. I think it’s 111 certainly or 111 minus; pretty sophisticated vocabulary;

**Spell Check (2)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Contextual (2):** these seem more like spell check errors; This is someone who will really rely on spell check;

**Disagreements First Time Period**
None

**Borderlines Second Time Period**
None

**Disagreements Second Time Period**
None

**Spelling (3)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**
None
Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): there are some spelling and word choice errors in here; And there are spelling errors and capitalization and things like that;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (1): I saw mainly some spelling, like phonetic issues maybe

Stream of Thought (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (2): stream of thought in my mind; and it seemed kind of stream of thought;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Style (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): I saw a good integration of quotes and a sophisticated style; I just thought the writing style was really solid;
Contextual (1): he’s setting up sort of an ethos here and starting to deal with concerns and counterarguments, and he does it in a very stylized way;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Support (10)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): basic support structure

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (8): I think the support and the organization for this is pretty strong; Because some of the support seems kind of I don’t know; Then most of her support is the story (RQ 7); there’s still some kind of support going on there; I don’t think the solution is really well supported (RQ 8); there’s not much support outside of the personal (RQ 8); there were two supporting paragraphs; I think it’s lacking some support there; I said there was really weak metadiscourse but that there was decent support and organization;
Contextual (1): And what put this into 112 for me was that I thought the support and the organization was really strong;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Thesis (14)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): I think from the thesis somewhat; I didn’t see a thesis really; There isn’t much of a thesis. I’m not certain if it’s stated. The thesis was a big problem; The thesis wasn’t clear until the end;
Contextual (2): she didn’t really deal with anything she said she was going to; I think she’s just kind of ripping off the prompt (RQ 7);

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (4): the thesis was a little unclear; I think you’re right about the thesis; I think you’re right about the thesis; With the thesis, conclusion, and transitions, they were just adequate;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): I didn’t see a clear thesis maybe or taking a stance on it; So that’s not much of a stance really; The thesis seemed vague. I can kind of figure out what the thesis is, but it seems to wander throughout; I thought the thesis was confusing;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): I put something down that said off thesis but on topic; The strongest sentence, her thesis, is this first part of her last paragraph [Reads sentence]. It’s a little conversational;
Vocabulary (4)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): some vocabulary issues; The vocabulary is good

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): I noticed that there was good vocabulary;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): pretty sophisticated vocabulary;

Weird (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): It seems kind of weird; I thought the conclusion was a little weird; I remember that was sort of weird;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): the construction there is just a little weird;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): you mentioned a couple of the weird sentence structures;
Contextual (1): The problems with the fragments usually come in the weird sentences when he is trying to combine sentences like here;

Word Choice/Usage (4)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): how to use “however”;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): word choice errors in here;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): I can see enough problems with it that it might warrant it because some of these errors are more sophisticated errors but some of them are word choice errors and you mentioned a couple of the weird sentence structures;
Contextual (1): I don’t know if it’s really indicative of that because the audience in her mind is English people who are looking for really high structures and words and things like that;

Writer Based (8)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): kind of writer-based;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): And that’s why I put it ultimately in 110. I thought that that was really writer based; I can see the writer-based; That writer-based part in the second paragraph didn’t fit with the rest of it either; I thought maybe it was writer based. I don’t know if it was [writer based] so much, but when it gets into her personal experience, I don’t know how that relates (RQ 7);

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): And I did see writer-based on this one, I thought; I thought the order of thoughts were kind of backwards at times, for some reason. I thought it might be writer based for that reason, and I thought there were some informal aspects to it like the yes; I thought that it was writer based;
Contextual (1): it is also a little conversational, but like the couple points that I could point out seem to me to be more intentional than what you might see because this doesn’t seem to be quite as writer based as a 110, I think;

Writing Ability/Potential of Students (5)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (4): I think she could do fine in 111; I saw a lot of potential there; I saw more potential I guess; That student will do well in 111;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): he’s going to have big problems;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Pair 1: 111 Frequency Codebooks
Each codebook contains the frequency that each individual criterion was invoked in placement discussions overall, in borderline discussions, and in discussions during the first half (June 12-June 22) and second half (June 26-July 19) of the Placement Program. Frequencies are meant to be general approximations; all frequencies are rounded up to the nearest half-point; therefore, the frequencies in any given codebook do not total 100%.

Overall
Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions/Sentence Boundaries: 12%
Clarity/Readability: 8%
Paragraphs: 8%
Essay/Essay Organization/Essay Structure/Five Paragraph: 6%
Main Ideas/Supporting Ideas/Main Points/Supporting Points: 5%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 5%
Repetition: 4%
Focus: 4%
Introduction/Conclusion/Set Up/End: 4%
Narrative/Personal (RQ 7): 3%
Thesis: 2.5%
Argument: 2%
Support: 2%
Benefit/Need/Help/Extra Time: 2%
Audience/Reader-Based: 1.5%
Fragments: 1.5%
Examples (RQ 8): 1.5%
Choppiness of Prose: 1%
Academic Discourse: 1%
Comma Issues: 1%
Article/Source/Quotes: 1%
Conversational/Informal: 1%
Counterargument: 1%
Iffy: 1%
Creativity: 1%
Comma Splices: 1%
Flows: 1%
Run Ons: 1%
Vocabulary: 1%
Weird: 1%
Word Choice/Usage: 1%
Writer Based: 1%
Writing Ability/Potential of Writers: 1%
Point of View Shifts/Shifts in Number: 1%
Prompt (RQ 7): 1%
Sophistication: 1%
Grammatical Errors: 0.5%
Humor/Sarcasm: 0.5%
Misuse of Terms: 0.5%
Logic: 0.5%
Assumptions: < 0.5%
Awkward/Stilted: < 0.5%
Clunkiness: < 0.5%
Critical Thinking/Thoughts: < 0.5%
Curricular Exemplars: < 0.5%
Development: 3%
Enough Problems: < 0.5%
ESL (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Comparing Essays: < 0.5%
Evidence: < 0.5%
Initiative/Effort: < 0.5%
On Topic (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Padded: < 0.5%
Question Marks/End Punctuation: < 0.5%
Spell Check: < 0.5%
Spelling: < 0.5%
Stream of Thought: < 0.5%
Style: < 0.5%
Borderlines

Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions/Sentence Boundaries: 10%
Clarity/Readability: 9%
Paragraphs: 8%
Essay/Essay Organization/Essay Structure/Five Paragraph: 7%
Focus: 6%
Introduction/Conclusion/Set Up/End: 5%
Main Ideas/Supporting Ideas/Main Points/Supporting Points: 5%
Repetition: 5%
Thesis: 4%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 4%
Narrative/Personal (RQ 7): 4%
Development: 3%
Benefit/Need/Help/Extra Time: 2%
Argument: 2%
Fragments: 2%
Choppiness of Prose: 2%
Counterargument: 2%
Examples (RQ 8): 2%
Writer Based: 2%
Article/Source/Quotes: 1%
Spell Check: 1%
Assumptions: 1%
Audience/Reader-Based: 1%
Comparing Essays: 1%
Comma Splices: 1%
Creativity: 1%
Enough Problems: 1%
Spelling: 1%
Stream of Thought: 1%
Vocabulary: 1%
Word Choice/Usage: 1%
Run Ons: 1%
Logic: 1%
Flows: 1%
Point of View Shifts/Shifts in Number: 1%
Question Marks/End Punctuation: 1%
Academic Discourse: < 0.5%
Awkward/Stilted: < 0.5%
Clunkiness: < 0.5%
Comma Issues: < 0.5%
Conversational/Informal: < 0.5%
Critical Thinking/Thoughts: < 0.5%
Curricular Exemplars: < 0.5%
ESL (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Evidence: < 0.5%
Grammatical Errors: < 0.5%
Humor/Sarcasm: < 0.5%
Iffy: < 0.5%
Initiative/Effort: < 0.5%
Misuse of Terms: < 0.5%
On Topic (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Padded: < 0.5%
Prompt (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Sophistication: < 0.5%
Style: < 0.5%
Support: < 0.5%
Weird: < 0.5%
Writing Ability/Potential of Writers: < 0.5%
First Half

Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions/Sentence Boundaries: 11%
Essay/Essay Organization/Essay Structure/Five Paragraph: 9%
Clarity/Readability: 7%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 7%
Main Ideas/Supporting Ideas/Main Points/Supporting Points: 6%
Focus: 5%
Development: 4%
Introduction/Conclusion/Set Up/End: 4%
Paragraphs: 4%
Repetition: 3%
Support: 3%
Thesis: 3%
Argument: 3%
Narrative/Personal: 3%
Audience/Reader-Based: 2%
Counterargument: 1.5%
Article/Source/Quotes: 1%
Awkward/Stilted: 1%
Benefit/Need/Help/Extra Time: 1%
Choppiness of Prose: 1%
Clunkiness: 1%
Comma Issues: 1%
Conversational/Informal: 1%
Comma Splices: 1%
Enough Problems: 1%
Creativity: 1%
Examples (RQ 8): 1%
Flows: 1%
Fragments: 1%
Grammatical Errors: 1%
Iffy: 1%
Logic: 1%
Misuse of Terms: 1%
Prompt (RQ 7): 1%
Sophistication: 1%
Spell Check: 1%
Stream of Thought: 1%
Style: 1%
Vocabulary: 1%
Weird: 1%
Writing Ability/Potential of Writers: 1%
Run Ons: 1%
Academic Discourse: < 0.5%
Assumptions: < 0.5%
Comparing Essays: < 0.5%
Critical Thinking/Thoughts: < 0.5%
Curricular Exemplars: < 0.5%
ESL (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Evidence: < 0.5%
Humor/Sarcasm: < 0.5%
Initiative/Effort: < 0.5%
On Topic (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Padded: < 0.5%
Point of View Shifts/Shifts in Number: < 0.5%
Question Marks/End Punctuation: < 0.5%
Word Choice/Usage: < 0.5%
Spelling: < 0.5%
Writer Based: < 0.5%
Second Half

Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions/Sentence Boundaries: 15%
Paragraphs: 11%
Clarity/Readability: 6%
Repetition: 5%
Examples (RQ 8): 3%
Writer Based: 3%
Focus: 3%
Introduction/Conclusion/Set Up/End: 3%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 3%
Benefit/Need/Help/Extra Time: 2%
Essay/Essay Organization/Essay Structure/Five Paragraph: 2%
Fragments: 2%
Article/Source/Quotes: 2%
Humor/Sarcasm: 2%
Point of View Shifts/Shifts in Number: 2%
Main Ideas/Supporting Ideas/Main Points/Supporting Points: 2%
Prompt (RQ 7): 2%
Thesis: 2%
Audience/Reader-Based: 1%
Creativity: 1%
Academic Discourse: 1%
Argument: 1%
Choppiness of Prose: 1%
Comma Issues: 1%
Comma Splices: 1%
Comparing Essays: 1%
Conversational/Informal: 1%
Development: 1%
Flows: 1%
Evidence: 1%
Ify: 1%
On Topic (RQ 7): 1%
Padded: 1%
Sophistication: 1%
Spelling: 1%
Weird: 1%
Word Choice/Usage: 1%
Assumptions: 0.5%
Critical Thinking/Thoughts: 0.5%
Narrative/Personal (RQ 7): 0.5%
Initiative/Effort: 0.5%
Awkward/Stilted: < 0.5%
Clunkiness: < 0.5%
Counterargument: < 0.5%
Curricular Exemplars: < 0.5%
Enough Problems: < 0.5%
ESL (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Grammatical Errors: < 0.5%
Misuse of Terms: < 0.5%
Logic: < 0.5%
Question Marks/End Punctuation: < 0.5%
Run Ons: < 0.5%
Spell Check: < 0.5%
Stream of Thought: < 0.5%
Style: < 0.5%
Support: < 0.5%
Vocabulary: < 0.5%
Writing Ability/Potential of Writers: < 0.5%
Pair 1
112 Placement Criteria Glossary

The abbreviation “T” refers to the textual definition of each criterion, and the abbreviation “C” refers to the contextual definition of each criterion. The abbreviation “RQ” refers to particular supporting research questions in the study.

**Academic:** C. Writers use over elevated academic language.

**Argument:** T. The essays’ arguments are clear and focused. C. Writers demonstrate and employ an understanding of argument in their essays.

**Article Source/Citations/Quotation Integration:** T. Essays are effectively developed with clear and strong source material and quotations. C. Writers demonstrate a strong ability to integrate source material and quotes into their essays.

**Audience/Reader-Based:** T. Audience awareness is weak. C. Writers use over elevated academic language, and therefore, appear untrustworthy to the audience.

**Benefit/Need/Help/Extra Time:** C. Writers may not benefit much from extra time or need extra work in English 111.

**Clarity/Readability:** T. The essays’ audience, main ideas, development, structure, and/or metadiscourse are clear. Some essays contain repetition.

**Cohesiveness:** T. Essays lack cohesiveness.

**Counterargument/Opposing Viewpoints:** T. Essays contain opposing viewpoints or arguments. C. Writers demonstrate an understanding of counterarguments and addressing opposing viewpoints.

**Critical Thinking:** C. Writers demonstrate effective critical thinking.

**Curricular Exemplars:** C. Writers address curricular exemplars of the writing program, such as problems and solutions.

**Development:** T. Essays demonstrate strong development and/or lack of development. Essays are effectively supported or too heavily supported by the online writing placement test’s article. C. Writers may not benefit from instruction in development in English 111.

**Examples/Evidence/Support:** T. Essays utilize good examples and support though some essays rely too heavily on statistics and other support. C. Writers use interesting examples, they exaggerate examples, and/or they demonstrate an ability to integrate the online writing placement test’s article to support their essays.
Essay Organization/Structure/Five Paragraph: T. Essays are well-organized or weakly organized. Overall, essays contain good or strong structures.

Flows: T. Essays demonstrate movement.

Focus: T. The essays are focused well or contain shifts in focus due to improper transitions.

Good/Strong and Weak/Passive Essay Elements: T. Essays contain good and/or strong points, transitions, analyses, examples, argument, organization, introduction, structure, ideas, metadiscourse, development, and/or integration of quotes. Some elements, such as conclusions, metadiscourse, and transitions are weak and some essays are passive. C. Writers demonstrate the ability to integrate the online writing placement test’s article.

I Must Have Been Off/Questioning My Placement/Zoning Out: C. Evaluators question their placement decisions due to their self-perceived lack of focus.

Liked/Interested/Engaged: C. Evaluators are interested in, engaged with, and/or liked the placement essays.

Introduction/Set Up/Conclusion: T. The essays’ introductions and conclusions are weak or strong. C. Writers need work with introductions and conclusions in class.

Language: C. Writers use over elevated language though they demonstrate good skill with sentence structure and vocabulary.

Main Ideas/Supporting Ideas/Main Points/Supporting Points: T. The main ideas, supporting ideas, main points, and supporting points are strong, good, clear, and/or busy. C. Writers will not need English 111 with regard to the development of ideas. Writers demonstrate an ability to present and/or transition among ideas.

Metadiscourse/Transitions: T. The essays contain weak, clunky, strong, sophisticated, and/or unfocused metadiscourse and transitions--organizational language that helps the audience/reader recognize the connections among the essays’ paragraphs and sentences. C. Writers need further work with metadiscourse/transitions.

Minor Errors: T. Essays contain minor errors.

Paragraphs: T. The essays’ paragraphs demonstrate various issues, such as good metadiscourse, too many ideas, strong points, good analyses, counterargument, development, transitions, or five-paragraph structures. Overall, weak and/or strong qualities of paragraphs are emphasized. C. Writers show the ability to transitions within paragraphs, integrate quotations, and develop and focus their arguments.

Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions: T. The essays’ sentences are strong or weak. C. Writers demonstrate an understanding of sentence structure.
Sophistication: T. Essays contain sophisticated voice and transitions.

Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary: T. Word choice, word usage, and/or vocabulary are weak or strong. C. Writers have a good understanding of vocabulary.

Writing Ability of Writers: C. Writers show the ability to incorporate outside sources for support and the ability to transition among ideas. However, writers over explain or fail to demonstrate an understanding of their explanations.
Pair 1
112 Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples

The following “Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples” corresponds to the preceding “Placement Criteria Glossary.” The in vivo examples for each criterion were studied, criterion-by-criterion, and the preceding glossary containing textual and/or contextual definitions of each individual criterion was written. Numbers in parenthesis note the number of times each criterion was invoked overall and according to the following categories: “Borderlines First Time Period,” “Disagreements First Time Period,” “Borderlines Second Time Period,” and “Disagreements Second Time Period.”

Academic (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (2): My concern with this is that the language seemed overelevated, and I mean, this is someone who has a really good grasp of sentence structure and vocabulary and all that, but when I’m looking through this, my initial reaction was 112-. My concern though is what kind of audience awareness does that show? Now his audience might be, I have to impress these people so I need as much academic ness as possible;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Argument (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): She had the understanding of an argument

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): The whole argument seemed focused to me; I remember thinking it had pretty good organization and stuff and the metadiscourse seemed a little weak to me, and it was a really passive paper, which is admittedly a pretty weak argument in terms of not putting it into 112;
Contextual (1): she delivers a lot of good argument and a lot of good examples, and I think this is someone;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): I know what he’s arguing;
Contextual (1): I mean, he could incorporate some of his creativity into his argument throughout;
Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Article Source/Citations/Quotation Integration (10)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): And I thought he was able to incorporate the article throughout as well, as least in these two paragraphs;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): I mean with these, I guess, unless that’s from the article;
Contextual (2): I thought it flowed nicely, and I thought it was all around a good essay, and I thought that even though it’s not cited, the student showed the ability to use outside sources; I thought he could show the ability to move from one idea to the next even within paragraphs, I thought. And he showed an ability to integrate quotations as well, which is something that you need for 112;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (5): I didn’t think it was developed very well in some parts, and I thought that maybe she was relying too much on the article; it was pretty clear, well-developed, and uses the article somewhat throughout; And I thought there were some strong sentences within there, and the integration of some of these quotes; The connection is the quote. “Clark states that one reason the demand for credit is great is because students have big spending plans”; The citations are not quite there;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (1): I saw some minor errors and stuff, but I thought the ability to integrate the article and use that for support was very strong;

Audience/Reader-Based (4)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (3): My concern with this is that the language seemed overelevated, and I mean, this is someone who has a really good grasp of sentence structure and vocabulary and all that, but when I’m looking through this, my initial reaction was 112-. My concern though is what kind of audience awareness does that show?; Now his audience might be, I have to impress these people so I need as much academic ness as possible; he’s trying to hide something because. I can go 112- with this because that was my initial reaction and thinking back on his audience, it’s possible that I’m just saying, I’m just doing it because I don’t trust him essentially;

Disagreements First Time Period
None
Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): I saw some issues within audience like maybe with the God comments and stuff, but that’s not a big problem, but like some transitions and the conclusion I thought was pretty weak;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Benefit/Need/Help/Extra Time (13)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (3): Transitions lacking between paragraphs, but I don’t know if the student is going to benefit from 111; I don’t think as far as development of ideas, this person is going to get much out of 111 and the rest of it is this you can fill in 112 really easily; This is someone who’s going to need a little work;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (3): Is this someone who’s going to need 111 a lot?; I thought that this person possibly wouldn’t need it [111]; And he showed an ability to integrate quotations as well, which is something that you need for 112;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (7): I wondered if she would really benefit from 111; How much is this person going to benefit from 111?; I can see things needing work, but I can’t see here needing all that much work or benefiting from a whole semester of it. Let’s go 112; How much is she going to get from 111? And yes. There’s still some work that needs to be done, but I don’t think that overall, 111 is going to help her all that much; it’s a weak 112 ‘cause he still needs that transition work, but I think it’s 112; If you don’t think she needs 111, then I’ll go 112; And there’s still work that needs to be done;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Clarity/Readability (10)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): I said the audience was clear;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): I can see the development of ideas; I mean, these are pretty well-developed paragraphs, and you can follow it along pretty easily; you can follow it along pretty easily;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (4): I thought it was pretty clear; it’s pretty clear as to what her main ideas are; I know what he’s talking about; I know what he’s arguing
Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): I mean she doesn’t have the extra style and stuff like that, but I thought it was, you know, well developed, and the points were clear and delivered well; I thought it was kind of repetitive, but there was strong reasoning and really good structure, and there was good metadiscourse, like this is something where things were pretty clear, but they were well-supported;

Cohesiveness (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): I said that it loses its cohesiveness towards the end; Really it kind of fails to conclude and relate back to the diet of over simulation directly;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Counterargument/Opposing Viewpoint (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): It was well-developed and had a counterargument;
Contextual (3): Strong transitions within paragraphs, development, looked like he understood counterargument, I think it came later though; He shows an understanding of counterargument or addressing an opposing viewpoint; I thought he was able to include opposing viewpoints like within paragraphs;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): she had a counterargument in there

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): There’s a slight acknowledgment of the counterargument near the end of the second paragraph;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Critical Thinking (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
None
Disagreements First Time Period

Contextual (2): I thought there was a lot of critical thinking going on there, and I thought the writing was fine; I definitely thought of her idea of the general business class was well thought out;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Curricular Exemplars (1)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (1): Then she goes into spending plans. And then what’s the solution? To budget your money and figure out what you need rather than what you want (RQ 8);

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Development (15)

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (4): I thought that the points were pretty strong. And I thought it was well-developed, too; This is pretty well-developed; It was well-developed and had a counterargument; Strong transitions within paragraphs, development, looked like he understood counterargument, I think it came later though; It seems pretty well-developed;

Contextual (1): I don’t think as far as development of ideas, this person is going to get much out of 111 and the rest of it is this you can fill in 112 really easily;

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (3): The development was there; I can see the development of ideas; I mean, these are pretty well-developed paragraphs, and you can follow it along pretty easily; I didn’t put that into 112 because I didn’t see some of these other points developed at all;

Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (5): I didn’t think it was developed very well in some parts, and I thought that maybe she was relying too much on the article; I just said it was strong essay because it was too point but it still had development; I thought it was pretty clear, well-developed, and uses the article somewhat throughout; It was a basic five paragraph essay almost, but if you take a look at the
development of the points, it’s pretty clear as to what her main ideas are, and she supports it fairly well; I thought it was pretty clear, well-developed;

Contextual (1): she kind of gets some development in that sense, and I wondered if she would really benefit from 111;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): I thought it was, you know, well developed;

Examples/Evidence/Support (10)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): She has a lot of good examples, that sort of thing; she delivers a lot of good argument and a lot of good examples; I think it might rely too heavily on stats and stuff like that;

Contextual (2): I thought the exaggerated use of examples was a little worrisome because to me that’s the what’s next term papers; I thought the examples were really interesting. I mean even though she might be stretching a little bit there, these examples kind of did speak to me;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): If you don’t think she needs 111, then I’ll go 112. It’s kind of my gut instinct with that, but I wasn’t sure if the evidence was there;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (4): She says, they need a class, but she describes what is in that class. So there’s a lot of good detail that backs that up; I saw some minor errors and stuff, but I thought the ability to integrate the article and use that for support was very strong; they were well-supported; I thought the ability to integrate the article and use that for support was very strong;

Essay Organization/Structure/Five Paragraph (12)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): I said it was a five paragraph theme;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): I said it was decent organization; I remember thinking it had pretty good organization and stuff and the metadiscourse seemed a little weak to me, and it was a really passive paper, which is admittedly a pretty weak argument in terms of not putting it into 112; It’s a basic [essay]. It’s just three paragraphs;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (6): I put it in 112- because I thought it was pretty well-organized and thought out, and it had a good structure; It needs some work, and the rest of these other three are very organized, they’re very to the point; there were strong structure; it had a good structure; I thought it was pretty well-organized; It was a basic five paragraph essay;
Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (2): But looking it over, I think you’re probably right with the structure and all that; really good structure;

Flows (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): I thought it flowed nicely;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): It flows really well;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Focus (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): The paragraphs seemed focused; The whole argument seemed focused to me;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): I thought that maybe there was some shifts in focus in paragraphs and maybe that had to do with not proper transitions or something like that;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Good/Strong and Weak/Passive Essay Elements (35)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (5): I thought that the points were pretty strong; Strong transitions within paragraphs; My only concern was weak transitions; I noted that there was a weak conclusion and such; the metadiscourse was a little weak;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (9): I thought that his points were very strong in the body paragraphs; I thought it was all around a good essay; there was a really good use of analysis; She has a lot of good examples, that sort of thing; she delivers a lot of good argument and a lot of good examples; I remember thinking it had pretty good organization and stuff and the metadiscourse seemed a little weak to
me; I thought it was excellent. I wrote excellent introduction other than, yeah, like you said that first sentence; it was a really passive paper; I thought that the conclusion was weak, too; it had pretty good organization and stuff and the metadiscourse seemed a little weak to me; I didn’t think it was very strong; like some transitions and the conclusion I thought was pretty weak; the introduction and conclusion are a little weak; it’s a weak cause he still needs that transition work, but I think it’s strong;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

*Textual (8)*: This is pretty good; I said it was a good introduction; it had a good structure; these are pretty good introductions; I thought that her ideas were strong; but they were well used overall in that there were strong structures and metadiscourse; I just said it was strong essay because it was too point but it still had development; And I thought there were some strong sentences within there, and the integration of some of these quotes

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

*Textual (8)*: really good structure, and there was good metadiscourse; I think there are some good ideas in here, too; It’s not just the good ideas; The ideas are pretty good, but it’s also; So there’s a lot of good detail that backs that up; I remember thinking this was pretty good; overall, I thought it was strong; strong reasoning and really good structure;

*Contextual (1)*: I thought the ability to integrate the article and use that for support was very strong;

**I Must Have Been Off/Questioning My Placement/Zoning Out (3)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

None

**Disagreements First Time Period**

*Contextual (1)*: I must have been off when I was reading some of these ‘cause I’m starting to go;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

None

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

*Contextual (2)*: Glossing it over a little, I was questioning my own choice on that I think; I was kind of zoning out at the beginning;

**Liked/Interested/Engaged (3)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

None

**Disagreements First Time Period**

*Contextual (2)*: I thought the examples were really interesting; I liked that a lot;
Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): And I thought it was engaging, too;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Introduction/Set Up/Conclusion (14)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (5): I was concerned about the introduction and conclusion; I noted that there was a weak conclusion and such; Really it kind of fails to conclude and relate back to the diet of over simulation directly; I just thought it was like a good set up; I was impressed by how she kind of set up what the problem was in the first half of the paragraph and what parents should do in the second half even though there are only two main ideas she deals with; my main concern was the end;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): I thought that the conclusion was weak, too;
Contextual (2): I think they can catch up on conclusions pretty quickly; I thought he needed some work with introductions and conclusions;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (6): like some transitions and the conclusion I thought was pretty weak; Let’s do 112-then ‘cause the introduction and conclusion are a little weak; I said it was a good introduction; I think that’s actually a pretty sophisticated introduction; I wrote excellent introduction other than, yeah, like you said that first sentence; these are pretty good introductions;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Language (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (2): My concern with this is that the language seemed over elevated; I mean, this is someone who has a really good grasp of sentence structure and vocabulary and all that;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Main Ideas/Supporting Ideas/Main Points/Supporting Points (18)

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (2):** I thought that the points were pretty strong; I thought that she had good points, but for me, a lot of the paragraphs felt like they were just a little too busy; I was thinking that, like this was pretty good, but my concerns were that the paragraphs don’t match up to his thesis points;

**Contextual (2):** I was impressed by how she kind of set up what the problem was in the first half of the paragraph and what parents should do in the second half even though there are only two main ideas she deals with; I don’t think as far as development of ideas, this person is going to get much out of 111 and the rest of it is this you can fill in 112 really easily;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (2):** I thought that his points were very strong in the body paragraphs; I didn’t see some of these other points developed at all;

**Contextual (2):** I can see the development of ideas; I definitely thought of her idea of the general business class was well thought out; Well, I thought he could show the ability to move from one idea to the next even within paragraphs, I thought;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (6):** I thought that her ideas were strong; it’s pretty clear as to what her main ideas are; It gives you sort of a reference point; they’re very to the point; I just said it was strong essay because it was too point but it still had development; It was a basic five paragraph essay almost, but if you take a look at the development of the points, it’s pretty clear as to what her main ideas are, and she supports it fairly well;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (4):** I think there are some good ideas in here, too; It’s not just the good ideas; The ideas are pretty good; There are a couple of points where it looks like, right here in paragraph two, and that is sleep with the exclamation point;

**Metadiscourse/Transitions (21)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (7):** I noted that the metadiscourse was a little weak, and that I think kind of hung up on me. Let’s put 112- with this; Like there seem to be some metadiscourse issues; I said it was a five paragraph theme, and I thought the metadiscourse was pretty good; I didn’t think that the transitions were very good between paragraphs; Strong transitions within paragraphs, development, looked like he understood counterargument, I think it came later though; My only concern was weak transitions; But that [transition] seems like something he would get pretty quickly;

**Contextual (1):** Transitions lacking between paragraphs, but I don’t know if the student is going to benefit from 111;
Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (4): I said it was decent organization, metadiscourse; I thought that even though it was only three paragraphs, there was a really good use of analysis, she had a counterargument in there, and there was a lot of metadiscourse and stuff; I remember thinking it had pretty good organization and stuff and the metadiscourse seemed a little weak to me, and it was a really passive paper, which is admittedly a pretty weak argument in terms of not putting it into 112; I did note that there was sophisticated voice and transitions;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (7): I said metadiscourse wasn’t great; they were well used overall in that there were strong structures and metadiscourse; There’s metadiscourse; I saw some issues within audience like maybe with the God comments and stuff, but that’s not a big problem, but like some transitions and the conclusion I thought was pretty weak; Transitions are clunky. I thought that was a real problem, but they were well used overall in that there were strong structures and metadiscourse; it’s a weak 112 ‘cause he still needs that transition work, but I think it’s 112; I thought that maybe there was some shifts in focus in paragraphs and maybe that had to do with not proper transitions or something like that;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (2): the transitions were a little iffy to me, but that’s something that can be worked on; there was good metadiscourse; I thought the transitions were kind of a problem; She maybe needs to work on some transitions, but overall, I thought it was strong;

Minor Errors

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): I did see some minor errors;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): I saw some minor errors and stuff;

Paragraphs (15)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): I said it was a five paragraph theme, and I thought the metadiscourse was pretty good; a lot of the paragraphs felt like they were just a little too busy; I was impressed by how she kind of set up what the problem was in the first half of the paragraph and what parents should do in the second half even though there are only two main ideas she deals with; Alright. I mean this paragraph was sort of a problem for me because it dealt with so much;
Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): I thought that his points were very strong in the body paragraphs; I had 112-, and I thought that even though it was only three paragraphs, there was a really good use of analysis, she had a counterargument in there, and there was a lot of metadiscourse and stuff; I mean, these are pretty well-developed paragraphs, and you can follow it along pretty easily. She has a lot of good examples, that sort of thing;  
Contextual (2): I thought he could show the ability to move from one idea to the next even within paragraphs, I thought. And he showed an ability to integrate quotations as well, which is something that you need for 112; It’s just three paragraphs, but for three paragraphs, she stays really on task, she delivers a lot of good argument and a lot of good examples, and I think this is someone;  

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (5): The first paragraph, I think, is a little misleading; There’s a slight acknowledgment of the counterargument near the end of the second paragraph; It was a basic five paragraph essay almost; I thought that maybe there was some shifts in focus in paragraphs and maybe that had to do with not proper transitions or something like that; I think it was this paragraph mainly;  
Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): There are a couple of points where it looks like, right here in paragraph two, and that is sleep with the exclamation point;

Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): This is someone who has a really good grasp of sentence structure and vocabulary and all that, but when I’m looking through this, my initial reaction was 112-.;  
Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): because that first sentence really sucks, but if you get rid of that, and you focus on the use...like him talking about his birthday, I think that’s actually a pretty sophisticated introduction; I wrote excellent introduction other than, yeah, like you said that first sentence; And I thought there were some strong sentences within there, and the integration of some of these quotes;  
Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Sophistication (2)
Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): I did note that there was sophisticated voice and transition;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): I just thought it sounded sophisticated;

**Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary (6)**

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): Overuse of vague words;
Contextual (1): this is someone who has a really good grasp of sentence structure and vocabulary and all that (C, CW);

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): I thought that the conclusion was weak, too. [Reads quickly from essay] I mean some it is just wording and stuff;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): She uses some words slightly incorrectly, like here is should be diligently instead of diligent;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): And I thought it was fairly well-worded; There are some words in here that I got hung up on like a “myriad of information”;

**Writing Ability of Writers (7)**

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): And I thought he was able to incorporate the article throughout as well, as least in these two paragraphs;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (3): I thought it flowed nicely, and I thought it was all around a good essay, and I thought that even though it’s not cited, the student showed the ability to use outside sources; I thought he could show the ability to move from one idea to the next even within paragraphs, I thought. And he showed an ability to integrate quotations as well, which is something that you need for 112; I think they can catch up on conclusions pretty quickly;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): she showed the ability even though she kind of went into it too much of like explaining what she meant by these things;
Disagreements Second Time Period

Contextual (2): I saw some minor errors and stuff, but I thought the ability to integrate the article and use that for support was very strong; That, I think, made me question whether or not she knew what she was saying;
Pair 1: 112 Frequency Codebooks

Each codebook contains the frequency that each individual criterion was invoked in placement discussions overall, in borderline discussions, and in discussions during the first half (June 12-June 22) and second half (June 26-July 19) of the Placement Program. Frequencies are meant to be general approximations; all frequencies are rounded up to the nearest half-point; therefore, the frequencies in any given codebook do not total 100%.

Overall

Good/Strong and Weak/Passive Essay Elements: 15%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 9%
Main Ideas/Supporting Ideas/Main Points/Supporting Points: 8%
Development: 7%
Paragraphs: 7%
Essay Organization/Structure/Five Paragraph: 5%
Introduction/Set Up/Conclusion: 6%
Benefit/Need/Help/Extra Time: 6%
Article Source/Citations/Quotation Integration: 4%
Clarity/Readability: 4%
Examples/Evidence/Support: 4%
Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary: 3%
Writing Ability of Writers: 3%
Counterargument/Opposing Viewpoints: 3%
Argument: 3%
Academic: 1%
Audience/Reader-Based: 2%
Cohesiveness: 1%
Critical Thinking: 1%
Flows: 1%
Focus: 1%
I Must Have Been Off/Questioning My Placement/Zoning Out: 1%
Liked/Interested/Engaged: 1%
Language: 1%
Minor Errors: 1%
Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions: 1%
Sophistication: 1%
Curricular Exemplars: < 0.5%
Borderlines

Metadiscourse/Transitions: 11%
Good/Strong and Weak/Passive Essay Elements: 10%
Introduction/Set Up/Conclusion: 9%
Development: 9%
Benefit/Need/Help/Extra Time: 8%
Main Ideas/Supporting Ideas/Main Points/Supporting Points: 7%
Paragraphs: 7%
Article Source/Citations/Quotation Integration: 5%
Essay Organization/Structure/Five Paragraph: 5%
Counterargument/Opposing Viewpoints: 4%
Clarity/Readability: 4%
Audience/Reader-Based: 3%
Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions: 2%
Argument: 2%
Writing Ability of Writers: 1.5%
Language: 1.5%
Academic: 1.5%
Cohesiveness: 1.5%
Examples/Evidence/Support: 0.5%
Flows: 0.5%
Focus: 0.5%
Liked/Interested/Engaged: 0.5%
Minor Errors: 0.5%
Curricular Exemplars: 0.5%
Sophistication: < 0.5%
Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary: < 0.5%
I Must Have Been Off/Questioning My Placement/Zoning Out: < 0.5%
Critical Thinking: < 0.5%
First Half

Good/Strong and Weak/Passive Essay Elements: 12%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 10%
Main Ideas/Supporting Ideas/Main Points/Supporting Points: 7%
Introduction/Set Up/Conclusion: 7%
Development: 7%
Paragraphs: 7%
Benefit/Need/Help/Extra Time: 5%
Counterargument/Opposing Viewpoints: 4%
Examples/Evidence/Support: 4%
Article Source/Citations/Quotation Integration: 3%
Audience/Reader-Based: 3%
Writing Ability of Writers: 3%
Clarity/Readability: 3%
Essay Organization/Structure/Five Paragraph: 3%
Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary: 2.5%
Academic: 2%
Language: 2%
Cohesiveness: 1.5%
Critical Thinking: 1.5%
Focus: 1.5%
Liked/Interested/Engaged: 1.5%
Minor Errors: 1%
Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions: 1%
Sophistication: 1%
Argument: 1%
Flows: 1%
I Must Have Been Off/Questioning My Placement/Zoning Out: 1%
Curricular Exemplars: < 0.5%
Second Half

Good/Strong and Weak/Passive Essay Elements: 15%
Main Ideas/Supporting Ideas/Main Points/Supporting Points: 9%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 8%
Essay Organization/Structure/Five Paragraph: 7%
Benefit/Need/Help/Extra Time: 6%
Development: 6%
Article Source/Citations/Quotation Integration: 5%
Clarity/Readability: 5%
Paragraphs: 5%
Introduction/Set Up/Conclusion: 5%
Examples/Evidence/Support: 4.5%
Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary: 3%
Writing Ability of Writers: 3%
Argument: 2%
I Must Have Been Off/Questioning My Placement/Zoning Out: 2%
Sentence Structure/Sentence Constructions: 2%
Audience/Reader-Based: 1%
Counterargument/Opposing Viewpoints: 1%
Curricular Exemplars: 1%
Flows: 1%
Focus: 1%
Liked/Interested/Engaged: 1%
Minor Errors: 1%
Sophistication: 1%
Academic: < 0.5%
Cohesiveness: < 0.5%
Critical Thinking: < 0.5%
Language: < 0.5%
Pair 2
110 Placement Criteria Glossary

The abbreviation “T” refers to the textual definition of each criterion, and the abbreviation “C” refers to the contextual definition of each criterion. The abbreviation “RQ” refers to particular supporting research questions in the study.

**Ability/Responsiveness of Instructors:** C. Evaluators refer to the ability of trained composition teachers.

**Argument:** T. Essays contain or do not contain argumentative or persuasive elements. Arguments are basic, good, vague, neutral, weak, sparse, unfocused, related or unrelated to the thesis, or nonexistent. C. Writers need assistance with argumentation and the argumentative structure.

**Article References/Citations:** T. References to the online writing placement test’s articles are unclear, vague, or weird. Essays over rely on article information.

**Audience/Reader Awareness:** T. Essays demonstrate low to no audience awareness, which includes such issues as tone and argument. C. Writers do not understand audience awareness issues.

**Benefit/Need/Ready For/Gain:** C. Writers would benefit from extra time in English 110, time at the Writing Center and professor’s office, time revising, time reading the handbook, and/or time working on sentence-level and syntactical concerns.

**Body Paragraphs:** T. The essays’ body paragraphs do not further the argument.

**Capitalization:** T. Essays contain capitalization errors. C. Writers made capitalization errors due to carelessness.

**Choppiness of Writing/Prose:** T. Sentences are repeatedly short, choppy, and vague. C. Writers rely upon lists to avoid choppy writing.

**Clarity/Readability:** T. Essays are vague, unclear, confusing, distracting, and/or time consuming to read. C. The lack of readability indicates that writers need more time in English 110.

**Clichés:** T. Essays rely heavily on modified trite expressions.

**Comfortable with Placement:** C. The evaluators are comfortable with their placement decisions.

**Commas:** T. Commas are misused, misplaced, or missing.
Comma Splices: T. Essays contain comma splices: two independent clauses joined by a comma.

Communication: T. Syntax inhibits communication. C. Writers have difficulty communicating ideas and points.

Counterargument: T. Essays contain effective or ineffective counterarguments.

Critical Thinking: T. Essays demonstrate good voice and critical thinking skills. C. Writers show good ideas and critical thinking skills.

Curricular Exemplars: C. Writers address curricular exemplars or model essays of the writing program, such as causes and solutions.

Development/Support: T. Essays are undeveloped, short, and/or lack support. C. Writers try to explain too much ineffectively, attempt to give examples in support of an argument, and/or need to develop essays more completely.

Essay Basics/Essay Structure/Essay Organization/Five Paragraph Essay: T. Essays contain a basic, vague, weak, general, repetitive, or nonexistent structure and organization. Some essays demonstrate a five paragraph structure. C. Writers demonstrate a basic understanding of essay structure and argumentative structure although they need additional help with argumentation.

ESL (RQ 7): C. Students may be ESL writers.

Focus/Drift: T. Essays contain focus and argument or lack a controlling argumentative focus. Essays drift and lose focus.


Homonyms: T. Essays contain homonyms, words that are similar phonetically but spelled differently and have different meanings.

Ideas: T. The essays’ ideas are unclear.

Interesting: T. Essays are interesting.

Introduction/Conclusion: T. The essays’ theses and conclusions do not match. Introductions and/or conclusions are weak or absent. C. Writers employ circular logic in conclusions.

Language: T. Language is vague or unclear.

Logic: C. Writers demonstrate nicely developed logic, circular logic, unclear logic, and unrealistic logic.
Metadiscourse/Transitions: T. The essays’ transitions are poor, and the metadiscourse is unclear.

Narrative (RQ 7): T. Essays rely upon narrative support, which does not support the argument.

Non Standard Dialect: C. Writers display nonstandard English dialect and stream-of-conscious writing styles.

Opinion/Rant: C. Writers provide opinions and/or rants rather than arguments.

Paragraphs: T. The essays’ paragraphs contain syntax problems, lack of clarity, focus, lack of focus, lack of relation to main ideas, grammatical errors, choppy prose, too much metadiscourse, and/or vague references to articles. C. Writers do not understand basic essay or paragraph structure.

Point of View Shifts: T. Essays contain point of view shifts among first, second, and third person.

Prompt (RQ 7): C. Essays do not respond to the online writing placement test’s instructions.

Punctuation: T. Essays are punctuated incorrectly or impede communication.

Questions: T. Essays contain frequent questions.

Repetition: T. Essays contain repetitive elements.


Semicolon: T. Essays contain improper use of semicolons. C. Writers try to use semicolons.

Sentences/Lower-Level Issues/Sentence-Level Issues/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Sentence Clarity/Syntax: T. Essays lack variety in sentence structure, and contain sentence-level concerns, syntactical errors, tangled sentence constructions, frequent sentence errors, unclear sentences, and/or choppy sentences, which impede communication. C. Writers may make sentence errors as a result of their attempts to construct complex sentences. Writers demonstrate an ability to construct complex sentences but may not feel comfortable combining sentences. Writers may have difficulty addressing their sentence-level issues in English 111 and may need more time in English 110.

Severity/Amount of Stuff/Enough Things: T. Essays contain a variety of pervasive problematic issues although primarily sentence-level errors. C. Writers may need the extra two hours per week in English 110 to address a variety of error.

Spelling: T. Essays contain spelling errors.
Talked Into: C. Evaluators indicate a willingness to be persuaded into placing writers into English 111.

Tangential: T. Essays contain unimportant information.

Thesis/Controlling Purpose: T. Overall, essays contain and/or lack a thesis statement or controlling purpose. For the most part, essays contain unclear and undeveloped theses or unconnected thesis statements, body paragraphs, and/or conclusions.

Tone: T. Essays contain an inappropriate tone, such as an angry tone. C. Writers communicate angry or harsh tones.

Word Choice/Usage: T. Word choice errors are frequent.

Writer Based: C. Essays are writer based. The writers’ prose makes sense primarily to them but not to an audience.

Writing Ability/Potential/Struggle: C. Writers demonstrate promise but will struggle in English 111.
Pair 2

110 Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples

The following “Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples” corresponds to the preceding “Placement Criteria Glossary.” The in vivo examples for each criterion were studied, criterion-by-criterion, and the preceding glossary containing textual and/or contextual definitions of each individual criterion was written. Numbers in parenthesis note the number of times each criterion was invoked overall and according to the following categories: “110S,” “Borderlines First Time Period,” “Disagreements First Time Period,” “Borderlines Second Time Period,” and “Disagreements Second Time Period.”

Ability/Responsiveness of Instructors (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (2): Like a 111 trained teachers; would you want this student in your 111 class?

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Argument (47)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (21): good enough attempt at argument; I said that it wasn’t really argumentative; I felt like it wasn’t really argumentative; it wasn’t argumentative; Has a thesis but doesn’t follow with argument; But there was an attempt at structure and argument; the basic structure and argument was there; But the body does not further the argument; argument was weak; The narrative it wasn’t in support of any true argument that I saw (RQ 7); there was an argument; it has a very basic structure in argument; this a neutral argument; I think it’s a more neutral argument; There is a thesis and argument; No argument; It’s a really weak argument; The argument didn’t start until really late in the essay, and they didn’t even call it that; but does have some semblance of an argument; argument is a bit all over the place; they didn’t have any real argumentative focus; Contextual (1): those [argument and syntax] are two pretty big areas to tackle [in 111]
Disagreements First Time Period
**Textual (14):** an argument structure; I couldn’t find where his argument was; it’s not argumentative; And then the overall argument seemed fuzzy to me at times; there was no central argument; the body didn’t work to further any kind of argument; it’s not like you could make up an argument that the body; And there was a thesis and an argument; I can’t see that because I was focusing more on the argument on this one; I though it was a good argument; It was a good argument; there was a pretty good attempt at an argument; Your [writer’s] purpose is not to modify clichés but to make your argument clear to your reader; I was a little bit kind of fuzzy on what the argument was;

Borderlines Second Time Period
**Textual (7):** needs argument; Vague argument of let kids be kids is pretty darn weak; weird argument kind of thing but sticks to it; I didn’t feel like the argument supported the thesis; it seems like the argument is that schools should not inhibit cell phones; this is more of a report than an argument (RQ 7); I think it’s following the thesis, but the thesis isn’t an argument; **Contextual (3):** they’re going to need development, structure, argumentation; does grasp argument structure; the student does attempt to give examples to support an argument;

Disagreements Second Time Period
**Textual (1):** And no real argument

**Article References/Citations (7)**

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
**Textual (1):** unclear references

Disagreements First Time Period
**Textual (1):** weird citation stuff;

Borderlines Second Time Period
**Textual (5):** Unclear reference to article; Vague references to the articles; unclear reference to the article; Unclear reference to article; over reliance on article statistics and info;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

**Audience/Reader Awareness (24)**

110S
None
Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (9): No clear audience I could pick up on; I had audience awareness as sloppy; the audience was a big problem; I wonder, especially with the audience awareness; having both audience awareness and the sentence-level issues; I saw audience and tone problems; low audience awareness; there’s audience issues; Audience awareness is an issue, so 110 sounds good;
Contextual (1): that [audience and sentences] might be a little too much to handle in 111;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (9): there’s no audience at all, and that’s a problem; I saw audience as being an issue; There is some audience stuff, too, on top of development; I think audience and development is enough on top of the sentence level issues; audience awareness and tone problem; in terms of audience and reader awareness; There’s a big audience issue, which was my major problem with it as far as the way that it’s being presented, the questions, and the anger, the angry tone; And then audience could have been better; make your argument clear to your argument clear to your reader;
Contextual (1): This student doesn’t understand even like the five paragraph essay let along something more sophisticated and on top of the audience awareness and the syntax problems;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (4): it’s a pretty severe audience problem; bit of audience issues as well; just like audience awareness; Low to no audience awareness;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Benefit/Need/Ready For/Gain (23)

110S
Contextual (1): I mean, if anything, it [110S] would help the student

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (9): 110 would greatly help the students get some of these issues under control before they moved onto 112; I just think that in a 111 class that without having that extra time, they would have to take that extra time in a Writing Center and in that professor’s office; I think that the extra time would be helpful to the student; I thought it was something a student could go to the Writing Center while they’re in 111 or read their Scott Foresman; maybe all of them together are enough to justify that extra time; more time in the 110 class would be beneficial to her; the student is going to have to spend extra time, so why not use the 110 allotment of time instead of making the student have to find their own time; they would probably get through 110 and be really strong going into 112; this shows us that they need that extra time to revise things and to work on things;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (8): I think that a 110 is needed for this because of that [write like they talk]; I think that it would help the student to go through 110; I want to make it better for them; I’m good
with 110 as far as that is something that [vary structure of paragraphs and combine thoughts] would need extra work; there were enough problems for me in a few different areas to warrant the extra two hours a week; student will need help with sentence-level concerns; I’m good with 110 as far as that is something that [vary structure of paragraphs and combine thoughts] would need extra work; They would be a pretty strong 112 after going through 110;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Contextual (4):** Could go 111, but 110 would help a lot; I think that it would be better for them, in preparation for 112, to have that extra time, and they’d probably come out of 110 being really, really strong; the extra help would be good; the extra time will help;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Contextual (1):** enough syntax and clarity issues to warrant the extra time;

**Body Paragraphs (3)**

110S
None

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (1):** But the body does not further the argument.

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (2):** the body didn’t work to further any kind of argument; it’s not like you could make up an argument that the body was furthering;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

None

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

None

**Capitalization (2)**

110S
None

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (1):** consistent capitalization problems;

**Contextual (1):** like spelling and capitalization that could have just been carelessness if that were the only problem (C, Constructing Writers);

**Disagreements First Time Period**

None
Choppiness of Writing/Prose (16)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (7): The writing was pretty darn choppy; choppiness is a big problem here; It seemed very 111y for me except for the choppy writing; Choppy writing; It was kind of choppy; I thought it was really, really choppy. For example, paragraph four [Reads quickly from essay]. “Average Americans eat at fast food restaurants three times a week”; but it’s choppy;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): sentences three and four of paragraph three overall choppiness and vagueness; I can see now the choppiness definitely; Overall choppiness and the general essay is pretty weak;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): it’s very choppy; Yeah it is very choppy; the choppiness made me into a drone and like made me like forget that I’m reading something.

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): Choppy; I have that it was choppy, expect that there a few exceptions later on. It started off really choppy;
Contextual (1): I put “lists.” It seemed like the person was just using lists as a way to avoid choppiness (RQ 7);

Clarity/Readability (23)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): it’s [essay] vague at times; Lack of clarity; lack of clarity especially in the first paragraph; ’Cause clarity is an issue;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): I also wrote down that I just had to reread a lot of sentences, like more than once to try to figure out what the student was trying to say; it doesn’t clarify it as the internet; I was confused;
Contextual (1): I don’t know what she’s trying to tell us;
Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (13): 'Cause things were starting to blend together for me after a while; the choppiness made me into a drone and like made me like forget that I’m reading something; Some clarity issues; I just think it’s clarity stuff; some clarity problems; This was one I had to keep having to read and read and I don’t know if it’s the essay or me; Let me look at it again because then it might have been the essay, not me, that was making me have to read and reread; I had to strain several times to understand what the writer was trying to say; I was also distracted when I was reading this on; Cause I was just seeing that things weren’t matching up, and I was confused; It took me forever to read; You had to read very slowly basically; There was a lot of confusion to me;

Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (1): 'Cause then there are things like “computers are 110 percent beneficial to young peoples’ aging.” What does that mean?

Contextual (1): I think this is when it started getting a little bad, where I felt myself slowing down; enough syntax and clarity issues to warrant the extra time (C, CW);

Clichés (2)

110S None

Borderlines First Time Period

None

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (2): And I thought it was also the use of these clichés and trying to modify them; Your purpose is not to modify clichés but to make your argument clear to your argument clear to your reader;

Borderlines Second Time Period

None

Disagreements Second Time Period

None

Comfortable with Placement (7)

110S None

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (1): I’m comfortable with 110;
Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (6): I’m comfortable with a 111; I am comfortable now; I’m comfortable with 111; I would be perfectly comfortable with going to a 111; I’d be comfortable with a 111 for her; I guess there’s not enough for me to feel comfortable either way;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Commas (8)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (7): Clause comma clause; And I had sentence and comma problems; lots of comma problems; which is kind of like stick commas in there; Students do not think about the future comma like adults do comma for one thing comma teenagers and young adults have the idea that they are invincible comma”; And for me, when you see things like that, where it’s not just a matter of if they hadn’t put commas in those places, you know, it would make sense; I saw mostly different comma issues going on and possessive issues, and those were the main things that I saw;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): There’s some commas issues;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Comma Splices (5)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): the comma splices; That’s pretty bad and another comma splice there; And there were some comma splices and it seemed like the last paragraph had a little bit of a writer based problem, so but then overall, the essay was okay;
Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): I said there’s a comma splice in paragraph one; that this was another student that I had talked about before about where I put in the commas in my head on my own because a lot it is comma issues and that sort of thing, so now looking at it again, I am seeing these things;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Communication (4)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): I mean the syntax was such a problem that it was inhibiting communication;
Contextual (1): has problems with communicating ideas and points;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): There’s some absence of communication because of the long sentences

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): Quite a few syntax errors. Interfering with communication

Counterargument (5)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): is this a counterargument or is this a neutral argument; there’s some counterargument; even some counterargument; So I saw problems with the thesis and the conclusion and the counterargument as well;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): They randomly have counterarguments;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Critical Thinking (3)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): there was good voice and thinking skills, like the critical thinking and everything; I saw the critical thinking stuff, too, and again it seemed like a 111 to me, except then I see sentences like “It has robbed teenagers to stop.”;
Contextual (1): I feel like the student has very good ideas and great critical thinking;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Curricular Exemplars (5)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (2): it wasn’t even really discussing causes, which is what the prompt wants them to do (RQ 8); there’s causes and solutions (RQ 8);

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (2): it’s supposed to be talking about reasons--causes (RQ 8); It’s like this is the first reason, and there’s another reason here, but I couldn’t find where his argument was; he never gives reasons for ways to fix the problem (RQ 8);

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): Doesn’t really offer solutions (RQ 8);

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Development/Support (28)

110S
None
Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (10): Maybe because I have covering way too much within it; Underdevelopment; needs development; I said underdevelopment; underdeveloped; I thought it was really underdeveloped; I said that it’s underdeveloped; it’s really underdeveloped; that those thoughts are nicely developed; this is a really small piece of writing;
Contextual (1): she maybe is trying to explain too much here, you know. Trying to get her point across, but it’s not coming across;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (4): I thought it was very underdeveloped; There is some audience stuff, too, on top of development; I think audience and development is enough on top of the sentence level issues; doesn’t offer support

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (8): No development; I have highly underdeveloped; It’s underdeveloped; Undeveloped; development needs balancing kind of stuff; underdeveloped; No development; Underdeveloped;
Contextual (2): they’re going to need development; the student does attempt to give examples to support an argument;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): a lot was in this paragraph; underdeveloped; Seems to be writing a lot without saying very much

ESL (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (2): it also sounded kind of ESL to me in some places (RQ 7); You know maybe it’s an ESL student has lived here for a long time (RQ 7)

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None


110S
None
Borderlines First Time Period

**Textual (30):** it has the basic elements of an essay; the basic structure and argument was there and it’s a weak essay; it has the basic elements of an essay; But do you think it’s [sentence-level issues] throughout the essay; I said that it seems the essay gets progressively weaker; the overall structure of the essay seemed weak to me; how to structure an essay; Understands essay form; basic essay was there; it is in an essay form; So I felt like it lacked structure; But there was an attempt at structure and argument; I was willing to be talked into 111 because the basic structure and argument was there; I saw that it was a five paragraph; I didn’t see any organization really; no real guiding organization; it has focus and organization issues; the basic structure and argument was there; basic essay was there; basic understanding of essay structure; I think it’s good; I think the essay structure; there was this knowledge of how to separate your paragraphs, how to structure an essay; it has a very basic structure in argument; I think the essay structure; it’s [essay] vague at times; she does understand essay structure; It’s an essay; the essay was okay; The argument didn’t start until really late in the essay;

**Contextual (4):** understands essay structure; has enough of a basic understanding of essay structure; she does understand essay structure; she does understand essay structure;

Disagreements First Time Period

**Textual (11):** I had an essay; And after reading so many essays on this topic; the general essay is pretty weak; I have huge issues when the essay is formatted this way, like in reading it, and by the way, it’s formatted in a like a double-spaced [inaudible] thing, and you can’t always tell where the paragraphs always break, and I don’t know if that limits my ability to spot things, so if you could please point them out to me that would be great; My biggest problem was that the whole essay follows the pattern of statement, for example, like the whole thing, and that sent up a whole bunch of red flags for me; there is a nice structure; I had an essay, an argument structure; there is a nice structure and the transitions were there; If the structure was there a little bit stronger, I would have been feeling the 111 a little more, but it seemed like everything was weak; focus and organization; Organization was a problem for me. I’m comfortable with a 110;

**Contextual (5):** This student doesn’t understand even like the five paragraph essay let along something more sophisticated and on top of the audience awareness and the syntax problems; They don’t know how to vary the structure of their paragraphs or combine different kinds of thoughts; I’m good with 110 as far as that is something that [vary structure of paragraphs and combine thoughts] would need extra work; they're going to learn those kinds of essay structures in 111; they're going to learn those kinds of essay structures in 111;

Borderlines Second Time Period

**Textual (14):** the basics are here; basic structure is there; It [essay] drifts into sort of a different place; Let me look at it again because then it might have been the essay, not me, that was making me have to read and reread; For me, the biggest red flag was sentence four of the essay that starts, “For them it may be as”; No real structure but it is an essay; there’s organization; Structure; No structure; No real structure but it is an essay; basic structure is there; I think it’s the same structure over and over and over again; but there’s no structure; Little if any structure;

**Contextual (2):** This was one I had to keep having to read and read and I don’t know if it’s the essay or me; they’re going to need development, structure, argumentation, and just like audience awareness, and that’s a lot, so I think a 110; does grasp argument structure;
Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Focus/Drift (16)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (9): when I started writing out like it has focus and organization issues; Focus issue; There was lack of focus; there were focused paragraphs; it had a decent focus and there was an argument; My issues were logic issues and focus stuff; my thing with like focus that that paragraph then wasn’t contributing to this idea of sleep where she never mentions this idea of sleep; they didn’t have any real argumentative focus; out of nowhere;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (4): I said focus problems; Seems to drift in focus a little bit for me; focus and organization; no controlling focus;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): Loses focus; Loses focus; There’s no real focus or thesis;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Fragments (4)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): I saw several sentence fragments; I felt they rely on fragments on awful lot; And I can understand like sometimes those [fragments] can be used effectively; But they’re [fragments] not being used effectively;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Grammar/Usage/Mechanics (6)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): grammar, usage, mechanics stuff; lots of grammar, usage, mechanics; grammar-level issues;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): miscellaneous grammar/usage/mechanics; there’s serious grammar, usage, mechanics issues; I have “maybe 110” with the grammar, usage, mechanics issues;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Homonyms (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): The amount of homonym issues; I didn’t know there were this many homonyms, you know;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Ideas (6)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): the ideas were distinct from each other. They weren’t divided up, but you know, they were still in there together; I saw the [inaudible] ideas as well; my thing with like focus that
that paragraph then wasn’t contributing to this idea of sleep where she never mentions this idea of sleep. So I can see a 110;

Disagreements First Time Period  
Contextual (3): My thing was has problems with communicating ideas and points; I think that’s what kept me in 111 was that that showed kind of an idea of transitioning between points; the student has very good ideas and great critical thinking;

Borderlines Second Time Period  
None

Disagreements Second Time Period  
None

Interesting (2)

110S  
None

Borderlines First Time Period  
Textual (2): this will be another interesting one; Interesting because I noticed that, too;

Disagreements First Time Period  
None

Borderlines Second Time Period  
None

Disagreements Second Time Period  
None

Introduction/Conclusion (7)

110S  
None

Borderlines First Time Period  
Textual (1): There’s no conclusion statements; the thesis and the conclusion do not match; conclusion is weak; I saw problems with the thesis and the conclusion; Conclusion; but that’s even kind of like that last thing in the conclusion, this like tangential thing;  
Contextual (1): circular logic like in the conclusion;

Disagreements First Time Period  
Textual (2): There was no conclusion; no conclusion;
Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): And there’s no introduction really or not a real conclusion; This introduction is not very strong; Weak introduction; it ended up different than where it started;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Language (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): vague language;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): some unclear vague language;

Logic (6)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (5): the circular logic was just killing me; My issues were logic issues and focus stuff; I saw kind of a logical pattern of thought and that those thoughts are nicely developed; circular logic like in the conclusion; needs reality as far as logic goes;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): unclear logic as well;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Metadiscourse/Transitions (6)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (4): Transitions are very poor; the transitions were there; transitioning between points; very poor transitions;

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (2): almost like too much metadiscourse; was a little bit kind of fuzzy on what the argument was, but I was just like every single, statement, for example, statement, for example, statement, for example;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Narrative (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (1): The narrative it wasn’t in support of any true argument that I saw (RQ 7)

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): More so relying on the stories going (RQ 7)

Non Standard Dialect (3)

110S

Contextual (3): I just wonder if a 110 instructor might want to be a little bit more aware of the fact that the student is really going to have to be really translating into the dialect of academic English; A lot of sentences are like stream of consciousness in kind of a different dialect; academese;
Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Opinion/Rant (3)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (3): writing an opinion rather than arguing an opinion (RQ 7); And rant. And it just seemed like, “Here’s my opinion, and I’m not going to back it up really” (RQ 7); In your face about it (RQ 7);

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Paragraphs (42)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (18): there are syntax issues especially in the fourth paragraph; Let’s take a look at it like the fourth paragraph. [Reads quickly from essay] That to me was like, “Ow. Big problem”; This one, paragraph two; lack of clarity especially in the first paragraph; End of paragraph four was really confusing; such as the sentences start with “By working” in paragraph one; everything smashed into the second paragraph; I still thought that within that second paragraph, that the ideas were distinct from each other; there were focused paragraphs; Last sentence in the first paragraph; For example, paragraph four [Reads quickly from essay]. “Average Americans eat at fast food restaurants three times a week”; that paragraph then wasn’t contributing to this idea of sleep where she never mentions this idea of sleep. So I can see a 110; This whole paragraph is
just. This is when I go to sleep; paragraph four; the first sentence of paragraph three; the last paragraph had a little bit of a writer based problem; I guess like with that third paragraph; Paragraphs are broken;

**Contextual (2):** All of paragraph four was confusing, I think; there was this knowledge of how to separate your paragraphs; they’ll need to work on breaking up there paragraphs;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (16):** syntax in paragraph two; Sentence five of paragraph three; I said there’s a comma splice in paragraph one; agreement in paragraph one problem; syntax such as the sentences “with that same” in the third paragraph; I wrote down the last sentence in the third paragraph; I felt that the paragraphs were really disconnected from one another; and the paragraphs just seem to be totally isolated from one another; It seemed like the last sentence of paragraph one; the last sentence of paragraph two; sentences three and four of paragraph three overall choppiness and vagueness; Strange sentence structure, like in paragraph two; you can’t always tell where the paragraphs always break; I wrote down the last sentence in the third paragraph; I felt that the paragraphs were really disconnected from one another; and the paragraphs just seem to be totally isolated from one another;

**Contextual (3):** This student doesn’t understand even like the five paragraph essay let along something more sophisticated and on top of the audience awareness and the syntax problems; They don’t know how to vary the structure of their paragraphs or combine different kinds of thoughts; I’m good with 110 as far as that is something that [vary structure of paragraphs and combine thoughts] would need extra work;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (3):** Vague references to the articles, and I noted the last sentence of paragraph two; especially in the second paragraph, you have like, almost like too much metadiscourse; I think it was stuff, like this third paragraph;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

No

**Point of View Shifts (3)**

110S

None

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (1):** there’s a point of view shift

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (2):** I saw point of view shift; Drifts from person

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

None
Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Prompt (6)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (3): it doesn’t address the prompt (RQ 7); It doesn’t address the prompt at all (RQ 7); they didn’t respond to the prompt (RQ 7);

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (2): I did not see it [thesis] matching any of the paper or the prompt (RQ 7); it doesn’t respond to the question (RQ 7)

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): I thought that it missed the prompt (RQ 7);

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Punctuation (4)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): If that sentence were properly punctuated, it would have been; It’s put together correctly as far as the words are in the wrong order, but it’s punctuated incorrectly; That wouldn’t make sense even if you changed the punctuation around;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Questions (3)

110S
None
Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): The questions really get in the way of the; the questions like are everywhere; the questions;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Repetition (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): it was repetitive;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): Repetitive at times;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Report (4)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): It was like a report (RQ 7); it’s a report mostly (RQ 7);

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): But then even here, it’s a report (RQ 7)

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): this is more of a report than an argument (RQ 7)

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Semicolon (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): I’m pretty sure this is an improper use of a semicolon;
Contextual (1): At least they’re trying a semicolon, I guess; semicolon issues;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Sentences/Lower-Level Issues/Sentence-Level Issues/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Sentence Clarity/Syntax (91)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (25): having both audience awareness and the sentence-level issues; do you think it’s [sentence-level issues] throughout the essay; there was sentence level stuff on top of that; Starting a ridiculous amount of sentences with now, which was a big red flag to me; There were lots of sentence-level things; That’s exactly what I was struggling with because there’s an awful lot of sentence-level stuff; but there was also quite a lack of variety in the sentence structure; I saw syntax, such as the sentences start with “By working” in paragraph one; Even that very first sentence: “A first year freshman should prepared to handle their money and expenses before they enter college by having a well-paying summer job and not accomplishing much credit with unnecessary valuables.” What does that mean?; but too many sentence-level problems for me to feel good about 111. Last sentence in the first paragraph; And then just kind of like again [inaudible] sentence-level issues; there were just a lot of sentence-level stuff and the amount of stuff; Every sentence had something; Let’s look at the sentence stuff you saw; It [sentence] went on forever; I saw syntax; There are a few syntactical errors; I didn’t note anything on the syntax; Some syntax but it was mostly just that there were several different kinds of things that were problematic; syntax is concern; I thought that there was enough syntax weirdness for concern; There were enough syntax problems there for concern; the fact that all the sentences are pretty much the same; Sentences get pretty tangled at times; that there are syntax issues especially in the fourth paragraph;
Contextual (10): There’s enough syntax problems, even though there’s evidence they can do complex constructions; he might have been trying to make larger [sentence] constructions and then messing up; do you think he can pull it off [sentences] in other places; I’m wondering if
through clearing up the prose that some of the lower level concerns would fix themselves as well, so it might be tied up into one issue?; she’s trying more complex sentences; that [audience and sentences] might be a little too much to handle in 111; if it was split up into two sentences, it would be fine, kind of thing; she was trying to cover too much information in that sentence; I did see syntax issues; those [argument and syntax] are two pretty big areas to tackle [in 111];

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (22):** don’t know how to vary the structure of their paragraphs or combine different kinds of thoughts; lots of sentence level stuff; Just like basic how to construct different kinds of sentences; it seemed like every other sentence, even if it was a small issue, there was an issue. So even if it was leaving off an “s,” and the next one there would be a syntax problem, and then the next one there would be a misspelling. It just seemed like there was so much of it that a 110 might be warranted; it seemed like a 111 to me, except then I see sentences like “It has robbed teenagers to stop”; Sentence five of paragraph three; this was like a sentence that just really, really made me afraid. “This then leads to my grades become lower”; syntax such as the sentences “with that same” in the third paragraph; I wrote down the last sentence in the third paragraph, and then I also wrote down that I just had to reread a lot of sentences, like more than once to try to figure out what the student was trying to say; lots of sentence level stuff; I think audience and development is enough on top of the sentence level issues; It seemed like the last sentence of paragraph one, the last sentence of paragraph two, sentences three and four of paragraph three overall choppiness and vagueness, doesn’t offer support; Strange sentence structure, like in paragraph two, there’s a sentence that starts with “lastly” that was really weird; I saw several sentence fragments; That’s two right in a row. Well, first of all, just looking at the sentences; I felt like almost every sentence had something in it, something wrong in it [Reads quickly from essay]; It [syntax] was very worrisome for me; There’s definitely syntax here; syntax in paragraph two; and the next one there would be a syntax problem; Syntax was a big problem for me; I mean the syntax was such a problem that it was inhibiting communication, and for me, that’s pretty major;

**Contextual (5):** And if she can’t realize that this a formulaic [sentence] construction; This student doesn’t understand even like the five paragraph essay let along something more sophisticated and on top of the audience awareness and the syntax problems; student will need help with sentence-level concerns; The student doesn’t know when to break sentences. Doesn’t really know what a sentence is just kind of writes like they talk; That sentence just sort of made me really scared because I feel like the student has very good ideas and great critical thinking;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (12):** There’s some absence of communication because of the long sentences; Vague references to the articles, and I noted the last sentence of paragraph two; A lot of the sentences were really unclear; Sentence level things aren’t overwhelming; it seems like they were writing the same kind of sentence over and over and over again; they were even starting sentences with conjunctions; every sentence is beginning with what the last sentence ended with over and over again; For me, the biggest red flag was sentence four of the essay that starts, “For them it may be as…”; it [sentence errors] wasn’t pervasive; sentence-level things; some syntax; lots of syntax issues;

**Contextual (1):** they don’t feel comfortable with combining sentences
Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (5): Quite a few syntax errors. Interfering with communication; some unclear vague language, but doesn’t severely interfere with communication; those are minor [syntax] things; there are major, major, problems with that [syntax]; Point out syntax stuff because that’s something I missed;

Contextual (1): enough syntax and clarity issues to warrant the extra time;

Severity/Amount of Stuff/Enough Things (36)

110S

Textual (2): it’s one of the more severe ones I’ve seen; seems like there’s so much

Contextual (1): I haven’t taught 110, so I don’t really know if this is something [the severity] the teacher would want to be aware of;

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (9): the amount of stuff; There are different problems here; lots of different kinds of problems; I don’t know if any one of them is pervasive enough; there were really pervasive sentence-level things; there were several different kinds of things that were problematic; Every sentence had something; I’m not sure if the severity is there;

Contextual (3): Do you think the severity is there?; it was enough to warrant a 110 because all these other elements were there; Do you think that they’re [errors] severe enough to warrant 110?;

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (11): So it was mostly like the amount of different things for me; amounts of writer based prose; There were different problems, so I would say 110; There were so many problems that were consistent problems, and different problems that a 110 would be warranted; 110. That’s a lot of different stuff; So it just seemed like there was enough. It felt 111y to me, but then there were just enough things to make me wonder; I think audience and development is enough on top of the sentence level issues. I’m good with a 110; it seemed like everything was weak; The quantity. It’s so pervasive; My biggest thing was just the sheer quantity of the things that I saw, it seemed like every other sentence, even if it was a small issue, there was an issue; I felt like almost every sentence had something in it, something wrong in it [Reads quickly from essay];

Contextual (3): And if she can’t realize that this a formulaic [sentence] construction, it also sounded kind of ESL to me in some places; It just seemed like there was so much of it that a 110 might be warranted; there were enough problems for me in a few different areas to warrant the extra two hours a week;

Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (6): lots of errors; it [sentence errors] wasn’t pervasive…but it’s like there’s organization, but there’s no structure; It has lots of different things going on; Is there enough severity here?; Although it got better, you know, it [sentence errors] wasn’t pervasive; Problems aren’t severe enough for 110;

Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (1): I think that was the one where I was finally like that was too much;
Spelling (4)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): like spelling

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): Misspelling; spelling; like the spelling and everything;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Talked Into (5)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (4): I was willing to be possibly talked into a 111; I was willing to be talked into 111; I was willing to be talked into 111

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): I can be talked into a 111.

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Tangential (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): this like tangential thing;

Disagreements First Time Period
None
Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): Tangential;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Thesis/Controlling Purpose (29)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (10): controlling purpose; There’s no real controlling purpose; there’s a thesis statement, Wheee!; Has a thesis but doesn’t follow with argument; I felt like the thesis contradicted itself; the thesis and the conclusion do not match; There is a thesis and argument; I saw problems with the thesis and the conclusion and the counterargument as well; The thesis says, “In my opinion, I think the cell phone has caused more trouble than good”; No clear thesis;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (15): But I think my biggest issue was that there was no thesis or controlling purpose; lack of thesis or controlling purpose; I didn’t see a controlling purpose probably because there was no thesis; That’s not your purpose here; Your purpose is not to modify clichés but to make your argument clear to your reader; But I think my biggest issue was that there was no thesis or controlling purpose; Well, that’s not really a thesis for this question, “What actions explain why students cannot manage or budget money.” So I’m looking for this thesis, and I don’t know, “young adults now have to pay for groceries, toiletries.” Okay. Now is that it? Or it’s like, I don’t know; I had thesis isn’t matching up because it’s saying; And there was a thesis and an argument; I was like, “And where is thesis?”; I did 110 because I really didn’t see a thesis. I combed it, and I couldn’t find it; I didn’t see a controlling purpose probably because there was no thesis, and I felt that the paragraphs were really disconnected from one another; thesis, but I did not see it [thesis] matching any of the paper or the prompt (RQ 7); No thesis; And that’s not even a debatable thesis really;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (4): I didn’t feel like the argument supported the thesis; I think it’s following the thesis, but the thesis isn’t an argument; the thesis isn’t the thesis; There’s no real focus or thesis;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Tone (3)

110S
None
Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): I saw audience and tone problems; tone problems;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): the anger, the angry tone; tone problem;
Contextual (2): some tone issues, a bit angry; he was overly trying to be clever, but it was coming across harshly instead of cleverly;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Typos (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): there’s so many typos; lots of typos;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Word Choice/Usage (8)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (5): has word level issues, hmmm, that’s a lot of issues. Maybe 110; has word choice issues; It’s put together correctly as far as the words are in the wrong order; word choice is poor; word-level, grammar-level issues;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): Word choice; word problems; I see that [word problems] as being a giant problem;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None
Disagreements Second Time Period
None

**Writer Based (16)**

110S
None

**Borderlines First Time Period**

Textual (6): I saw writer based prose; writer-based stuff; the last paragraph had a little bit of a writer based problem; This [writer based] was another thing that bothered me; This was the writer-based thing; This [writer based] was another thing that bothered me

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (3): 110 because of the intense amounts of writer based prose; I saw the writer based prose, too, unclear logic as well;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

Contextual (6): There was a lot of writer-based prose; There actually is more writer-based stuff than I caught the first time around, like the simple as that, kids be kids, plain and simple, Like it might be a writer-based prose kind of thing. It is obviously is making sense in her head, his head; teeters on writer based in a couple of spots; writer based prose at times; some writer-based prose; but it’s like making perfect sense in this writers’ mind but not in the readers mind;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (1): Writer-based

**Writing Ability/Potential/Struggle (7)**

110S
None

**Borderlines First Time Period**

Contextual (1): There is some promise;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (3): I don’t think 110 would hurt them and obviously it doesn’t hurt people, but I think that they would struggle in 111; I feel like they would be a lot of work [in 111]; I would maybe be more comfortable with a 110 than sticking them in 111 and then them really struggling with it;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

Contextual (3): She will struggle in 111; Stream of consciousness; would have trouble in 111

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Pair 2: 110 Frequency Codebooks

Each codebook contains the frequency that each individual criterion was invoked in placement discussions overall, in borderline discussions, and in discussions during the first half (June 12-June 22) and second half (June 26 -July 19) of the Placement Program. Frequencies are meant to be general approximations; all frequencies are rounded up to the nearest half-point; therefore, the frequencies in any given codebook do not total 100%.

Overall
Sentences/Lower-Level Issues/Sentence-Level Issues/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Sentence Clarity/Syntax: 15%
Argument: 8%
Paragraphs: 7%
Severity/Amount of Stuff/Enough Things: 6%
Thesis/Controlling Purpose: 5%
Development/Support: 4.5%
Audience/Reader Awareness: 4%
Benefit/Need/Ready For/Gain: 4%
Clarity/Readability: 4%
Writer Based: 2.5%
Choppiness of Writing/Prose: 2.5%
Focus/Drift: 2.5%
Article References/Citations: 1%
Word Choice/Usage: 1%
Writing Ability/Potential/Struggle: 1%
Curricular Exemplars (RQ 8): 1%
Commas: 1%
Comma Splices: 1%
Comfortable with Placement: 1%
Counterargument: 1%
Ideas: 1%
Fragments: 1%
Grammar/Usage/Mechanics: 1%
Introduction/Conclusion: 1%
Logic: 1%
Report (RQ 7): 1%
Talked Into: 1%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 1%
Prompt (RQ 7): 1%
Punctuation: 1%
Questions: 0.5%
Body Paragraphs: 0.5%
Communication: 0.5%
Non Standard Dialect: 0.5%
Opinion/Rant (RQ 7): 0.5%
Tone: 0.5%
Point of View Shifts: 0.5%
Capitalization: < 0.5%
Semicolon: 0.5%
Spelling: 0.5%
Ability/Responsiveness of Instructors: < 0.5%
Clichés: < 0.5%
Critical Thinking: < 0.5%
ESL (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Homonyms: < 0.5%
Interesting: < 0.5%
Language: < 0.5%
Narrative (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Repetition: < 0.5%
Tangential: < 0.5%
Typos: < 0.5%
Borderlines

Sentences/Lower-Level Issues/Sentence-Level Issues/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Sentence Clarity/Syntax: 13%
Argument: 8%
Paragraphs: 6%
Development/Support: 5.5%
Severity/Amount of Stuff/Enough Things: 5%
Clarity/Readability: 4.5%
Thesis/Controlling Purpose: 4%
Audience/Reader Awareness: 4%
Benefit/Need/Ready For/Gain: 3%
Writer Based: 3%
Focus/Drift: 3%
Choppiness of Writing/Prose: 2.5%
Commas: 2%
Article References/Citations: 1.5%
Comma Splices: 1.5%
Counterargument: 1%
Fragments: 1%
Grammar/Usage/Mechanics: 1%
Curricular Exemplars (RQ 8): 1%
Introduction/Conclusion: 1%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 1%
Opinion/Rant (RQ 7): 1%
Prompt (RQ 7): 1%
Punctuation: 1%
Repetition: 1%
Logic: 1%
Ideas: 1%
Semicolon: 1%
Talked Into: 1%
Report (RQ 7): 1%
Word Choice/Usage: 1%
Writing Ability/Potential/Struggle: 1%
Homonyms: 0.5%
Interesting: 0.5%
Tangential: 0.5%
Typos: 0.5%
Ability/Responsiveness of Instructors: < 0.5%
Body Paragraphs: < 0.5%
Capitalization: < 0.5%
Clichés: < 0.5%
Comfortable with Placement: < 0.5%
Communication: < 0.5%
Critical Thinking: < 0.5%
ESL (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Language: < 0.5%
Narrative (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Non Standard Dialect: < 0.5%
Point of View Shifts: < 0.5%
Questions: < 0.5%
Spelling: < 0.5%
Tone: < 0.5%
First Half

Sentences/Lower-Level Issues/Sentence-Level Issues/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Sentence Clarity/Syntax: 14%
Paragraphs: 9%
Argument: 8%
Severity/Amount of Stuff/Enough Things: 6%
Thesis/Controlling Purpose: 5%
Audience/Reader Awareness: 4%
Benefit/Need/Ready For/Gain: 4%
Focus/Drift: 3%
Development/Support: 3%
Choppiness of Writing/Prose: 2%
Clarity/Readability: 2%
Word Choice/Usage: 2%
Writer Based: 2%
Commas: 1.5%
Comfortable with Placement: 1.5%
Prompt (RQ 7): 1%
Punctuation: 1%
Grammar/Usage/Mechanics: 1%
Curricular Exemplars: 1%
Introduction/Conclusion: 1%
Fragments: 1%
Ideas: 1%
Logic: 1%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 1%
Comma Splices: 1%
Counterargument: 1%
Opinion/Rant (RQ 7): 1%
Writing Ability/Potential/Struggle: 1%
Tone: 1%
Spelling: 1%
Talked Into: 1%
Ability/Responsiveness of Instructors: 0.5%
Critical Thinking: 0.5%
ESL (RQ 7): 0.5%
Homonyms: 0.5%
Body Paragraphs: 0.5%
Capitalization: 0.5%
Clichés: 0.5%
Report (RQ 7): 0.5%
Semicolon: 0.5%
Point of View Shifts: 0.5%
Questions: 0.5%
Article References/Citations: < 0.5%
Communication: < 0.5%
Interesting: < 0.5%
Language: < 0.5%
Narrative (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Non Standard Dialect: < 0.5%
Repetition: < 0.5%
Tangential: < 0.5%
Typos: < 0.5%
## Second Half

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sentences/Lower-Level Issues/Sentence-Level Issues/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Sentence Clarity/Syntax</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity/Readability</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development/Support</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argument</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severity/Amount of Stuff/Enough Things</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choppiness of Writing/Prose</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writer Based</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefit/Need/Ready For/Gain</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article References/Citations</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis/Controlling Purpose</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Ability/Potential/Struggle</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience/Reader Awareness</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus/Drift</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report (RQ 7)</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commas</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraphs</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prompt (RQ 7)</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction/Conclusion</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curricular Exemplars (RQ 8)</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangential</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative (RQ 7)</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comma Splices</td>
<td>&lt; 0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability/Responsiveness of Instructors</td>
<td>&lt; 0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body Paragraphs</td>
<td>&lt; 0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capitalization</td>
<td>&lt; 0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clichés</td>
<td>&lt; 0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfortable with Placement</td>
<td>&lt; 0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counterargument</td>
<td>&lt; 0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>&lt; 0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL (RQ 7)</td>
<td>&lt; 0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fragments</td>
<td>&lt; 0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar/Usage/Mechanics</td>
<td>&lt; 0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homonyms</td>
<td>&lt; 0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideas</td>
<td>&lt; 0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interesting</td>
<td>&lt; 0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logic</td>
<td>&lt; 0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metadiscourse/Transitions</td>
<td>&lt; 0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non Standard Dialect</td>
<td>&lt; 0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion/Rant</td>
<td>&lt; 0.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Point of View Shifts: < 0.5%
Punctuation: < 0.5%
Questions: < 0.5%
Semicolon: < 0.5%
Spelling: < 0.5%
Talked Into: < 0.5%
Tone: < 0.5%
Typos: < 0.5%
Word Choice/Usage: < 0.5%
110S

Benefit/Need/Ready For Gain: 25%
Severity/Amount of Things/Enough Things: 75%
Pair 2
111 Placement Criteria Glossary

The abbreviation “T” refers to the textual definition of each criterion, and the abbreviation “C” refers to the contextual definition of each criterion. The abbreviation “RQ” refers to particular supporting research questions in the study.

**Ability/Responsiveness of Instructors:** C. English 111 instructors should be able to help the writers with various difficulties, such as sentence-level errors, readability, proofreading, and grammar.

**Argument:** T. Essays contain no arguments, neutral arguments, weak arguments, repetitive arguments, unclear arguments, good arguments, or overstated arguments. C. Writers do not know how to argue and could benefit from instruction in argumentation, essay drafting, and audience in English 111.

**Article/Source:** T. The essays’ references to the articles or sources are unclear, which is an audience issue. C. Writers will receive more instruction in source use in English 112.

**Audience/Reader Awareness:** T. Essays demonstrate low to no audience awareness, which includes issues such as awkward phrasing, lack of a thesis statement, and unclear references to the article. C. Instructors teach audience awareness in English 111.

**Benefit/Need/Ready For/Gain:** C. Writers may/will benefit from extra time in English 111 to work on issues such as essay structure, audience awareness, introductions, conclusions, theses, and focus. The time in English 111 would better prepare writers for English 112.

**Choppiness of Writing/Prose:** T. Sentences are repeatedly short, choppy, and vague. C. English 111 instructors should be able to help writers with the choppiness.

**Clarity/Readability:** T. Essays are difficult to understand and time consuming to read. C. The essays are not clear enough for English 112, but English 111 instructors should be able to help students with clarity.

**Comfortable with Placement:** C. The evaluators are comfortable with their placement decisions.

**Commas:** T. Commas are misused, misplaced, or missing. C. Writers use commas to indicate pauses in their speech.

**Comma Splices:** T. Essays contain comma splices: two independent clauses joined by a comma.

**Communication:** T. Essays communicate meaning or meaning is inhibited due to issues such as phrasing and organization. C. Writers have trouble communicating their ideas.
Counterargument: T. Essays contain hints of counterargument or impressive counterarguments. C. Writers demonstrate knowledge of essay and counterargument.

Creativity: T. Essays demonstrate creativity.

Critical Thinking: T. Essays demonstrate critical thinking.

Curricular Exemplars: C. Writers address curricular exemplars or model essays of the writing program, such as causes and solutions.

Development/Support: T. Essays are undeveloped, overdeveloped, or well-developed. Development is often choppy and repetitive. C. Writers need help learning how to develop essays in English 111.

Drafts/Papers: C. Evaluators compare placement essays to exploratory drafts, rough drafts, or papers in English 111.

Essay Basics/Essay Structure/Essay Organization/Five Paragraph Essay/Standard Essay: T. Essays include the basic elements, such as thesis, controlling purpose, and/or five paragraph structure. The essay’s structure and organization are weak, unfocused, simplistic, unsophisticated, non-argumentative, or nonexistent. C. Writers demonstrate a basic understanding of essay structure; however, they need more practice with organization skills in English 111.

Focus/Drift: T. Essays contain strong focused arguments or include unfocused, convoluted, random, rambling, and/or unfocused arguments. C. Writers need to learn focused argumentation in English 111.

Generalizations/Sexist Language: T. Essays contain generalizations and sexist language.

Grammar/Usage/Mechanics: T. Essays contain errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics. C. Instructors may have to remind writers to proofread or go to the Writing Center to correct grammar, usage, and mechanics errors.

Ideas: T. The essays’ ideas are clear and focused. C. Writers need help unpacking their ideas in support of an argument.

Introduction/Conclusion: T. The essays’ introductions and conclusions are strong, good, creative, nice, weak, or nonexistent. Some introductions and conclusions lack needed information.

Language: T. Language is vague, good, or demonstrates critical thinking. Language includes generalizations and sexist references.
Logic/Reasoning: T. Writers demonstrate problematic logic, circular logic, well-reasoned logic, or weird logic. Writers will need to work on logic issues in English 111. C. Writers demonstrate nicely developed logic, circular logic, unclear logic, and unrealistic logic.

Main Points/Supporting Points: T. The essays’ main points and sub points need more development and/or organization.

Mean/Nice/Generous: C. Evaluators say that they are being mean, nice, or overgenerous in their placement decisions.

Metadiscourse/Transitions: The essays’ metadiscourse or transitions are lacking, not smooth or sophisticated, poor, good, or weak.

Narrative (RQ 7): T. Essays rely too heavily upon narrative support. Essays are not overly persuasive.

Notes: C. Evaluators did not write anything positive on their Placement Note Sheets concerning individual placement decisions.

Paragraphs: T. The essay’s paragraphs lack transitions and metadiscourse, focus, logic, and/or development and/or contain choppy prose, word-level issues, counterargument, comma splices, arguments, reasons, repetition, transitions, and/or organization. C. Writers have a slight understanding of paragraph structure.

Point of View Shifts: T. Essays contain point of view shifts among first, second, and third person.

Prompt/Topic (RQ 7): C. Essays do not respond to the online writing placement test’s instructions and/or are off topic. The instructions do not encourage a focus.

Repetition: T. Essays contain repetitive elements, such as arguments and the repetition of expressions such as “I believe” and “I think.” C. Evaluators note that their English 111 students’ essays contained repetitive elements in essays early in the semester. Instructors should be able to help writers eliminate repetition in English 111.


Sentences/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Syntax: T. Essays contain complex sentence structures, sentence-level concerns, unclear sentences, repetitive sentences, syntax issues, sophisticated and unsophisticated sentences, tangled sentence constructions, surface sentence level issues, choppy sentences, and/or sentence boundary issues. C. Writers can address and improve sentence level issues in English 111 or English 112. English 111 instructors can remind writers to go to the Writing Center or spend time focusing on syntax and proofreading. Some writers know how to vary sentence structures, and their sentences will become more complex with time.
Severity/Amount of Stuff/Enough Things: T. Essays do not contain enough pervasive problematic issues, particularly sentence-level and syntactical errors, to warrant an English 110 placement. C. English 111 instructors should be able to handle writers’ errors without the training needed for English 110 instructors.

Simplistic: T. Essays are simplistic structurally.

Sophistication: T. Essays lack sophistication and/or are not sophisticated enough for English 112. C. Writers demonstrate or attempt sophisticated writing abilities. English 111 gives writers more tools to develop sophistication.

Talk About It: C. Evaluators indicate a desire to talk about placement decisions for clarification.

Thesis/Controlling Purpose: T. Essays contain or lack a thesis and/or controlling purpose. Theses are clearly stated, supported or unsupported, weird, strong, unclear, good, not explicit, and/or placed inappropriately in the essays. C. Writers will learn theses and controlling purposes in English 111.

Thoughts: C. Writers need to learn how to organize their thoughts in English 111.

Voice: T. Writers demonstrate a strong voice. C. Writers’ essays in English 111 may contain a strong voice.

Word Choice/Usage: T. Essays contain strange, repetitive, or strange word choice.

Writer Based: C. Essays contain (or do not contain) writer based elements. Writer based prose makes sense primarily to the writers but not necessarily to the audience/reader. Writers can correct writer based prose in English 111.

Writing Ability/Knowledge/Attitude of Students: C. Writers demonstrate skill levels and knowledge indicative of the English 112 level. Overall, writers will struggle in English 112 but do well in English 111. Some writers demonstrate ability or laziness in crafting their essays.
Pair 2
111 Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples

The following “Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples” corresponds to the preceding “Placement Criteria Glossary.” The in vivo examples for each criterion were studied, criterion-by-criterion, and the preceding glossary containing textual and/or contextual definitions of each individual criterion was written. Numbers in parenthesis note the number of times each criterion was invoked overall and according to the following categories: “Borderlines First Time Period,” “Disagreements First Time Period,” “Borderlines Second Time Period,” and “Disagreements Second Time Period.”

Ability/Responsiveness of Instructors (13)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (3): I don’t think you need special training [in 110] to address the problems that you have here; Because any 111 teacher should be able to tell her this is an exploratory draft; There’s choppiness but nothing that’s so overwhelming that that the average 111 teacher isn’t going to be able;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (2): She’ll need some help but it shouldn’t be anything that the average 111 instructor can’t deal with; She’ll need some help but it shouldn’t be anything that the average 111 instructor can’t deal with; But as a 112 teacher, I don’t know if I’d want to be teaching that stuff [sentence-level things] in 112;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (6): I said there are a lot, and I underlined lot, sentence level errors, but the average 111 instructor should be able to handle this; I wasn’t sure whether or not it [readability of essay] was okay for a 111 instructor to handle; I almost thought the student wouldn’t be spending as much time with the instructor as they would in a 110 classroom; the instructor is going to have to remind them to go to the writing center and do some proofreading or if it was going to be more syntax based. This is how we construct sentences. This is what subject verb agreement is; if these were things that could be taken care of in 111; So with the proper guidance;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (2): But it [repetitiveness] also should be something that the average 111 instructor, I guess, could address; So I guess what I thinking is that, you know, for the most part, 111 instructors should be able to handle this;

Argument (47)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (15): I wasn’t sure if she was taking an argument; it would have been a more sophisticated kind of argument if she would have started with that; I thought that the argument was kind of unclear, but it does attempt one; no argument; I think that the argument is there; the overall argument…pretty good; there was a neutral argument going on; it didn’t get to the
argument until paragraph three, and there was just a little tiny snippet of argument but then it concluded with something completely; Weak argument; argument is there; there is an argument here; argument is there; But not really like an argument kind of thing except, like you said, down here; where’s the argument?; What was the argument again?; 

Contextual (4): And they really don’t know exactly how to argue it possibly; it does focus and argue something; it kind of seems like a neutral argument; But argument will be taught in 111; But it seems like the student might be able to [argue] through revision;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (7): note the kind of argument she is making; I had argument okay, the focus of the argument; They’d start out and most of the paragraph would be like just data and then there would be an argument at the end; It just seemed like it was more tipped towards the report side than the argument side (RQ 7); there was enough argument there that I was willing to do 111; the fact that there was no real argument bothered me; I saw the lack of argument;

Contextual (2): The beginning of my 111 class like with the diagnostic and the first rough draft of that argument paper, you see a lot of this, or I saw a lot of this; But we do teach argument in 111 and 110;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (12): which [repetition] makes the argument weak; They have a focused argument; they do stay on argument, they just keep repeating the argument over and over again, which means it’s not as developed as it looks; The argument was good; the argument is pretty good; There are distinct ideas in support of an argument, but the thesis isn’t clearly stated; not a lot of argument going on; Once they get an argument going, then organization can fall into place; argument is overstated; Very typical argument and structure; argument isn’t super strong; very typical set up and argument;

Contextual (5): Needs to learn more focused argumentation geared toward an audience, can pick this up in 111; I have pretty vague writing and a neutral argument, but both could be taken care of in 111; Is there really an argument here?; But we learn argument in 111; I think the main part of is that he’ll just need to learn argument;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): I felt like I had a hard time finding the argument;

Contextual (1): needs more knowledge of the essay and argument structure

Article/Source (10)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): It’s just talking about another example from the article; there were the unclear references to the article and everything; I saw unclear references to the article;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): thoughtful response to the article
Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (4): There are some vague references to the article; Unclear references; It’s just that very end when you’re just like, “For example, a person in my town.” You’re like, where did the person in the town come from? I kept it not even in 111+ was like the audience awareness being kind of low because her use of sources or whatever;
Contextual (1): But that’s [use of sources] also a big 112 focus more than a 111 focus;

Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (1): I saw a lot of unclear references to the article, which to me was an audience issue.

Audience/Reader Awareness (20)

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (8): audience awareness is very low; I mostly focused on the audience problem; Let’s see if I can find it and see what the audience problem was; My major issue was audience; There was some awkward phrasing of things that I mean that was also related to audience; I’m just hoping these audience things aren’t such a huge issue; Lacks audience awareness; Lacks audience awareness for the most part;
Contextual (2): But we do cover audience in 111, too, and since I wouldn’t call this writer-based prose; Like there is an awareness that somebody is going to read this;

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (5): If there were audience awareness and, you know, no thesis statement and something like that, that could be a problem; that was a good example of audience awareness; My biggest issue was with their audience awareness; I saw an audience problem; lack of audience;

Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (2): kept it not even in 111+ was like the audience awareness being kind of low because her use of sources or whatever; audience awareness; There was audience stuff here; audience awareness;
Contextual (2): Needs to learn more focused argumentation geared toward an audience; No apparent audience that I could detect; could benefit from lots of work on conventional essay structure and audience awareness;

Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (1): I saw a lot of unclear references to the article, which to me was an audience issue.

Benefit/Need/Ready For/Gain

Borderlines First Time Period

Contextual (5): Do you think 110 is needed [for the student]?; Do you think they need the extra time?; I just think that 111 is really needed for this student; It’s stuff [introduction, conclusion, thesis, focus] she’ll learn in 111; So I think 111 will be really good for the student;
Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (6): I don’t think 111 would be a waste of her time; I wouldn’t want her to retake 112; I’m just worried that the student might be ready for the complexity of writing that’s gonna be [in 111]; Would you say that the student has something to gain from 111?; Possibly bored in 112; I just wonder if an extra two hours of 110 is really warranted;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (8): the student would still benefit from more practice in 111; I think she would definitely benefit from 111; could still benefit from 111; could benefit from lots of work on conventional essay structure and audience awareness; I could also see where they could benefit from more practice in 111; I think that she could still benefit from 111; extra time [in 110] could be useful; I think 111 is needed; I think practice will be good for the student;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (2): The time would be more beneficial for the student; A high 111 would be good, so they would go into 112 being rocking;

Choppiness of Writing/Prose (14)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (5): I thought that the writing was pretty choppy; the choppy sentences; Like I think with development, the choppy sentences will start to go away; My biggest issue was the choppy prose especially in the second paragraph; It was pretty choppy; My biggest issue was the choppy prose;
Contextual (1): There’s choppiness but nothing that’s so overwhelming that that the average 111 teacher isn’t going to be able;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): it was choppy prose; Choppy sentence kind of stuff; I saw the choppy writing, too;
Contextual (1): there is some choppiness they’re going to have to work on;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (4): and there was some choppiness; It was kind of choppy in places; A bit choppy; writing is very choppy;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Clarity/Readability (11)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): And there was an ease of reading it; I thought the sentence style and variety was okay even if there was a little bit of a clarity problem sometimes; I would have to read sentences over and over again to get them, I can’t read;
Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): I had a hard time following this essay; I think it did but I still found myself lost in it; I don’t understand that;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): clarity issues; I had to reread so many sentences just to understand what it was saying; Worried a bit about occasional lack of clarity;
Contextual (2): not as clear as should be expected for 112; I wasn’t sure whether or not it [readability of essay] was okay for a 111 instructor to handle;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Comfortable with Placement (9)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (3): I’m comfortable with 111; I’m comfortable with 111; I’m obviously comfortable with 111

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (5): I’m comfortable with 111; I’m comfortable with a 111; I would be perfectly comfortable with going to a 111; I’d be comfortable with a 111 for her; I guess there’s not enough for me to feel comfortable either way;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): I absolutely feel comfortable with a 111;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Commas (13)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): He put in commas before these verbs; they put a comma in the wrong spot. No biggie; great introduction and conclusion; it was like a question, but then it’s restated in the conclusion;
Contextual (3): it’s a habit [misusing commas] that he’s going to have to break; He’s going to need to work on it [commas]; Like, I think that he’s trying, like he thinks that this is an introductory phrase or something;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (5): She never uses commas, which was problematic for me; I mean, if you forget a comma here and there, but if you just like, all of these little introductory phrases, there were no commas; If there’s just comma stuff, then that shouldn’t be in 110; Commas; Big comma problem; And I noticed some comma issues;
Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): They’re throwing in commas in weird places like the way they speak, or something like that;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Comma Splices (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): Comma splices first paragraph

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): there are a lot of comma splices; There are some comma splices

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Communication (7)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (5): I said this essay is actually communicating; there are some just communication issues as far as some of the phrasing; we didn’t have communication really being impeded; big communication problems; Because I saw that [organization] it really getting in the way of communication;
Contextual (2): having trouble communicating their ideas; They’re throwing in commas in weird places like the way they speak, or something like that, so I wasn’t sure if that didn’t interfere with communication at all;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Counterargument (9)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): even some counterargument; There is a counterargument present; There is even a counterargument;
Contextual (1): The counterargument and knowledge of essay form is what’s keeping me in 111;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (4): it had a counterargument for one; Some counterargument, which is pretty impressive and nice examples; There was also a little bit of counterargument in the last paragraph, which I thought was pretty impressive; Looks like a hint of counterargument;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): Even a little bit of counterargument;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Creativity (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): it has a really creative conclusion

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): There is some really good creativity here

Critical Thinking (5)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): that the critical thinking…pretty good; I thought it showed great critical thinking ability;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): there were some really good critical thinking here; critical thinking; the language control and critical thinking are 112 level;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Curricular Exemplars (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): demonstrates problem, moves to proposing a solution; Drifts into a solution. Then a cause then a solution;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Development/Support (54)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (22): covering too much; they didn’t break up their stuff in the paragraphs and develop it; the development; with development, the choppy sentences will start to go away; but if that’s the only thing is development, then I think 111 is fine; the development were really impressive; I said that the essay was underdeveloped; It’s underdeveloped for me, also; The amount of underdevelopment really worried me; The underdevelopment really worries me though; highly underdeveloped; The underdevelopment was a big problem for me; I think that the choppiness is sort of a function of the underdevelopment; it was the organization and development that were big problems for me; incredibly underdeveloped; It does obviously need development; well probably with the development; underdeveloped; I saw that it was a little bit underdeveloped; underdeveloped; I had very underdeveloped; I didn’t feel like it [essay] was supported.
Contextual (1): I hate underdeveloped stuff;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (14): nice examples; I think the biggest problem for me was underdevelopment; some attempt at organization and development of points; the only problem was underdevelopment; it was choppy prose and underdevelopment; so much as underdevelopment; development; needs development; the overall underdevelopment; My obvious biggest problem was underdevelopment; they either needed to cut down on the support, like they over supported themselves; tiny little paragraphs; they were also much longer paragraphs; but they [examples and support] were so buried in these giant paragraphs where there was too much information;
Contextual (4): I think the student will definitely, a good balance of development, you know, is something that they’re going to have to work on because it looks like the student is just trying to bring in a lot of support; But needs to know what to focus on and what needs development; that that’s something that at the beginning of 111 could be homed in as far as focus on a few main causes and develop those; And she’s giving examples for each reason, but I can see where that would be good for a 111 and then you know help her really develop that;
Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (11): the good development; more developed; there’s some sort of organization and development; they just keep repeating the argument over and over again, which means it’s not as developed as it looks; nicely developed; The development of this really threw me off a bit; the development is okay; Too much information; I have underdeveloped; very underdeveloped; I thought there was good use of vocabulary and development;
Contextual (1): needs some work with development;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): it was densely developed;

Drafts/Papers (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (4): This could be a rough draft; Because any 111 teacher should be able to tell her this is an exploratory draft; Because they’ll be required to have longer papers anyway; maybe with the work that they do with their essays in 111;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (2): I remember when I was teaching 111 those early papers we see that a lot, though; The beginning of my 111 class like with the diagnostic and the first rough draft of that argument paper, you see a lot of this [repetition], or I saw a lot of this;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None


Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (21): the basic elements of the essay, I think, were there. There was a thesis [Reads the essay aloud]. That seems to be the controlling purpose, and if you think of that, then they’re actually pretty focused with their essays; I saw basic stuff there; basics were there, but I didn’t see the whole thing as being writer-based; I did see the basic essay as being there; basic essay; basic understanding of an essay structure; basic elements are there; I said that the essay was underdeveloped and drifts from its thesis; it was also an essay, so it was a very weak essay; knowing the aspects of the essay was kind of what kept me, cause I think having the choppy sentences and the development; evidence of more complex [sentence] constructions in this essay; It’s pretty weak, but the basic elements of the essay; they’re actually pretty focused with their essays; the basic essay as being there; I said it [essay] was pretty darn weak; It has structure; And the structure was there; but has a slight understanding of structure and paragraph; The structure was weak, but there was some structure; I thought the overall structure was weak; there was an attempted structure and there is an argument here; Organization is an issue; It was just
organization mostly for me; the organization is a bit off; Like it was the organization and development that were big problems for me; It’s organized;

Contextual (6): maybe with the work that they do with their essays in 111; I felt like the essay drifted around; I thought that it was a weak five paragraph essay; she is demonstrating knowledge of essay here; The counterargument and knowledge of essay form is what’s keeping me in 111; It was just a weak essay; basic understanding of an essay structure; basic understanding of an essay structure; it doesn’t seem to have a clear sense of “I know I’m organizing this, and I have this plan for organizing it this way” (Contextual, Constructing Writers);

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (23): it was a very simplistic essay; I had a hard time following this essay; it was a standard essay; I didn’t think it was like it even bordering on not really being an essay; shows basic essay components; good execution of a five paragraph essay; major logic problems in this essay; Basic essay elements are there; the essay specifically explains; I saw that the basics were there; it’s a basic five-paragraph, it’s not very sophisticated; But there is a thesis, and it’s like your five paragraph; good structure and good execution of a five paragraph essay; it had a good organization and focus; And I had some issues with organization; some attempt at organization and development of points; it becomes more organized as it progresses; It was an unusual organization strategy, but I don’t think really maybe worked that well, but it was unusual; but great…organization; better organization would have helped; I did not see any clear organization even like as far as grouping of ideas; the overall structure was okay; there is no structure. I did not see any clear organization even like as far as grouping of ideas;

Contextual (4): We expect, as instructors, that she is going to spend her essay discussing this major reason; she was trying something other than the typical five paragraph; I feel like structure will be taught in 111 and that’s the student’s major problem; I can see how being taught structure will help some of these other things get taken with;

Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (34): I said that it doesn’t look an essay but it functions like one; Overall essay components are there; the basic essay elements were there; starts out sounding writer based but gets stronger as essay goes on; Conclusion ends somewhere different than the essay; it was a very report essay (RQ 7); It’s weak in structure, organization; I saw a good focus, organization; Has organization even without the paragraphs; I had a little bit of trouble finding the organization; No real organization; If this note is true, and she did lose her first paper, there’s some sort of organization and development; they could kind of organize a paragraph; Once they get an argument going, then organization can fall into place; Has a structure, has an organization; has an organization; I think they do have organization; structure and organization; has an organization and structure; Pretty standard organization and structure; They have a standard organization, but is that enough?; Because I saw that [organization] it really getting in the way of communication; there’s an attempt at a more sophisticated structure; more complex structure; It’s weak in structure, organization, focus; I didn’t see the writing as being particularly strong either structure-wise or sentence-wise; needs a structure; I thought that the basic essay elements were there; but the basics are here; the basic skills were demonstrated; the basic skills; Very weak five paragraph; five paragraph; It moves away from a five paragraph;
**Contextual (9):** Needs to learn structure; The main issue is that they need to learn structure, but that can be taught in 111; could benefit from lots of work on conventional essay structure and audience awareness; Very typical argument and structure and details are good; I can see the ability to organize thoughts in a cohesive manner; I said this essay is actually communicating; pretty good essay; could benefit from lots of work on conventional essay structure and audience awareness; that there was a stronger voice in this essay than most; Will learn essay in 111; I wasn’t sure whether or not it [readability of essay] was okay for a 111 instructor to handle; it shows evidence of ability even if the essay isn’t pulled together inadequately; Needs to learn structure, but ideas are clear;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**  
**Textual (2):** a simple structure; lack of sophistication in structure

**Focus/Drift (28)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**  
**Textual (3):** It’s like they can’t find a focus because the prompt doesn’t really encourage one (RQ 7); it does focus and argue something; I didn’t see much of a thesis or focus; they’re actually pretty focused with their essays; some focus issues;

**Disagreements First Time Period**  
**Textual (3):** good organization and focus; I said focus and sentence tangle problems throughout; the focus; Drifts in focus was a problem for me; it really needed focus;  
**Contextual (2):** that that’s something that at the beginning of 111 could be homed in as far as focus on a few main causes and develop those; But needs to know what to focus on and what needs development;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**  
**Textual (18):** It’s weak in structure, organization, focus; I saw a good focus; the focus is there. I think that was the big thing. They have a focused argument; Okay focus; Focus is good even if it’s off prompt (RQ 7); I said no focus or controlling purpose; I felt like it drifted all over the place. There was no real focus; Focus is way off; the focus was pretty far off; There was no real focus; No focus. Going everywhere; No orientation of it; I thought it was rambling everywhere; it was having random thoughts on this; Convoluted; Lots of different things going on; there were like some contradictory statements; These weird limited facts just seemed to come out of nowhere  
**Contextual (2):** Needs to learn more focused argumentation geared toward an audience, can pick this up in 111; I don’t think that's [no focus] outside of the realm of 111 land;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**  
None
Generalizations/Sexist Language (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): I had serious issues with the generalizations and sexist language, which made me keep it out of 112; It also seemed to go on forever;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Grammar/Usage/Mechanics (12)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): there were like word-level problems or grammar problems;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (6): lots of grammar usage mechanics issues more than syntax issues; quite a few grammar, usage, mechanics errors and enough syntax errors for concern even though the overall structure was okay; I have some grammar, usage, mechanics issues; some grammar/usage/mechanics; were there a lot of grammar, usage, mechanics problems ‘cause that didn’t stick out as a big problem to me?; wrong end punctuation in paragraph four and five;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (4): I said lots of grammar, mechanics, usage…issues; some grammar, usage, mechanics, and sentence-level stuff; they [word usage] are definitely kind of jarring; Because I’m looking, and I saw the “theirs,” and they [word usage];
Contextual (1): I saw lot of grammar type things that I wasn’t sure if it’s just a matter of, the instructor is going to have to remind them to go to the writing center and do some proofreading or if it was going to be more syntax based;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Ideas (7)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): there are distinct ideas; there were these distinct ideas;
Contextual (1): Like if they are forced to unpack their ideas [in 111],
Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): at the 112 level, students coming into it kind of need to have some sense of how to unpack their ideas;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): ideas are clear; There are distinct ideas in support of an argument;
Contextual (1): having trouble communicating their ideas;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

**Introduction/Conclusion (29)**

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (7): at the very end of the conclusion, it was “the internet is the most beneficial type of technology when used correctly”; I say great conclusion; It only discusses factors in the introduction and conclusion, which was a problem for me; Her introduction doesn’t mention the internet; I saw a lot of good things, especially like the introduction; great introduction and conclusion; it was like a question, but then it’s restated in the conclusion;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): skimpy little introductions and conclusions; and it has a really creative conclusions; nice introduction and conclusion;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (17): I thought the introduction and conclusion kind of stunk; weak introduction and conclusion; Conclusion ends somewhere different than the essay; no conclusion; the lack of conclusion; No conclusion; The introduction and conclusion are pretty weak; Conclusion is a bit off; conclusion is weak; the weak conclusion; if it was just the conclusion thing; But it does start to make sense toward the end; Conclusion ends somewhere different than the essay; but falters at the end; I just think that that ending. It was the only thing that made me think about 110; It’s just that very end when you’re just like, “For example, a person in my town.” You’re like, where did the person in the town come from?; There’s two introductions;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): good introduction and conclusion; Good introduction and conclusion;

**Language (6)**

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): I had serious issues with the generalizations and sexist language, which made me keep it out of 112. It also seemed to go on forever;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): I said very vague language in places; Where’s the vague language?; vague language;
Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): the language control and critical thinking are 112 level; Language control is good;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Logic/Reasoning (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (3): There was stuff like…kind of just logic stuff; I saw some major, what I consider major logic problems in this essay; logic would probably be an issue for then that they’d probably have to work on in 111;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (2): some weird logic at times; there were just some circular kind of logic.

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (1): well thought out reasons;

Main Points/Supporting Points (4)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (4): main points; development of points; even though it didn’t spend a lot of time on each point, so maybe that’s why it felt like it was off topic (RQ 7); they needed to break into sub points more effectively;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Mean/Nice/Generous (5)

Borderlines First Time Period

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (4): being mean today; I guess I’m being nice today. Maybe I felt bad about yesterday; being mean today; I was being nice;
Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): I may have been a little overgenerous

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Metadiscourse/Transitions (14)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): needs metadiscourse; needs metadiscourse though; There isn’t a lot of transitions and metadiscourse; I saw it lacked metadiscourse;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): ‘Cause I think also her transitions are very smooth. There’s not, they’re higher level transitions; they’re not first, second, third. They’re, you know, “another reason,” “in addition too,” “not only are”; The transitions are pretty good; And the transitions and metadiscourse are pretty low for a 112; steps in between to get us there (transitions);

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (8): overall metadiscourse to hold everything together; There are pretty poor transitions, and like you said, metadiscourse stuff; good metadiscourse, transitions are needed; Needs transitions; Good transition between paragraphs; Besides that one transition, the other transitions were a little weak; good transitions; Good transitions;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Narrative (4)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): it’s a bit too narrative kind of thing (RQ 7)

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): overwhelming narrative at times (RQ 7); a pretty thoughtful response to the article, but since she was caught up in her personal response (RQ 7); it wasn’t overly persuasive (RQ 7);

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Notes (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): I didn’t put anything positive down [on Placement Note Sheet], which possibly shows a 110;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): I wrote a lot of negatives here, so I’m assuming I wanted to stay in 111

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Paragraphs (34)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (13): the thesis is actually in the last paragraph; I need to start noting more what paragraphs there in; the structure of the first and second sentences of the second paragraph; this must be the paragraph I was talking about; There isn’t a lot of transitions and metadiscourse thought like in between the paragraphs; My biggest issue was the choppy prose especially in the second paragraph; it didn’t get to the argument until paragraph three; I had word-level issues, second paragraph; Let’s look at that second paragraph; It’s not like you see something in every sentence or every other sentence or even in every paragraph; The paragraph could be combined a little bit better; Paragraphs are disconnected; they didn’t break up their stuff in the paragraphs; Contextual (1): has a slight understanding of structure and paragraph

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (11): I mean these skimpy little introductions and conclusions and tiny little paragraphs; This paragraph especially; there are sentences like this one in the second paragraph: "The causes mentioned above while concerning are not as nearly as alarming as the fact that the frequency of their occurrences is and has been increasing exponentially"; There was also a little bit of counterargument in the last paragraph; I didn’t see that much repetition of it. I would see it like maybe once each paragraph, but they were also much longer paragraph; Comma splices first paragraph, run on in paragraph two, wrong end punctuation in paragraph four and five; One of it was the last sentence of paragraph three; It seemed like the paragraphs…They’d start out and most of the paragraph would be like just data and then there would be an argument at the end; but they [examples] were so buried in these giant paragraphs where there was too much information; thought it was one paragraph, yes, but clear prose and distinct ideas, and there is some semblance of an argument present; I think he’s providing reasons within this paragraph (RQ 8);

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (9): And then there were things like paragraph three where; Has organization even without the paragraphs; Oddly enough this big paragraph seemed to be the strongest part; Every
paragraph has that, which [repetition] makes the argument weak; I noted the last sentence of paragraph three. [Reads from placement essay]. Well, that’s not…I think it was just the first part of this that was a problem for me; Paragraphs three and four were a little too similar for me. Good transition between paragraphs two and three; A lot of skimpy paragraphs with little to no connection; they could kind of organize a paragraph; I think it was paragraph four there were just some circular kind of logic;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**
None

**Point of View Shifts (2)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**
None

**Disagreements First Time Period**
*Textual (2):* point of view shifts; point of view shift in five from the teen to you back to the teen again, and the;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**
None

**Disagreements Second Time Period**
None

**Prompt/Topic (6)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**
*Contextual (3):* I wouldn’t even know if I could argue this question because it’s like yes or no, and (RQ 7); It’s like they can’t find a focus because the prompt doesn’t really encourage one (RQ 7); I think a lot of it is with this prompt, too (RQ 7);

**Disagreements First Time Period**
*Contextual (2):* it wasn’t answering the prompt really (RQ 7); even though it didn’t spend a lot of time on each point, so maybe that’s why it felt like it was off topic (RQ 7)

**Borderlines Second Time Period**
*Contextual (1):* it’s off prompt (RQ 7);

**Disagreements Second Time Period**
None

**Repetition (12)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**
*Textual (1):* it’s a little repetitive;
Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): I said that it was repetitive at times; The repetition of the “I believe” “I think” seemed to be a big issue to me. I mean it’s there, every other sentence begins with “I think” “I believe”; But I didn’t see that much repetition of it;
Contextual (4): I remember when I was teaching 111 those early papers we see that a lot, though (Contextual, Constructing Teachers); The beginning of my 111 class like with the diagnostic and the first rough draft of that argument paper, you see a lot of this [repetition], or I saw a lot of this; I would see it like maybe once each paragraph, but they were also much longer paragraphs, you know; we see that [repetition] a lot of that in 111;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (4): repetition of “this is limiting”; Every paragraph has that, which [repetition] makes the argument weak; I said it was somewhat repetitive. I think picking up on what you were just mentioning about the relying too much on certain words or whatever; they just keep repeating the argument over and over again, which means it’s not as developed as it looks; some repetitiveness;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (3): I’ve had students like this, and it seems like it [repetitiveness] would be an easy problem to fix, but it isn’t. [Laughter]; But it [repetitiveness] also should be something that the average 111 instructor, I guess, could address; I’m like, who is that? [Reads from placement essay]. But you know that is something we do in 111. [Reads from placement essay]. Kids are asked to be blah, blah, blah. Kids have a lot of pressure blah, blah, blah. Kids today get up today at six am, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah…Kid, kid, kid, kid (repetitive)

Report (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): It just seemed like it was more tipped towards the report side than the argument side; It was kind of reporty to me. It seemed like the paragraphs…They’d start out and most of the paragraph would be like just data and then there would be an argument at the end; (RQ 7)

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): I saw it as being a report (RQ 7)

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Sentences/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Syntax (70)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (21): the structure of the first and second sentences of the second paragraph; And I did see some evidence of more complex [sentence] constructions in this essay; sentence structure
looks pretty good; Did you see some sentence variety?; miscellaneous sentence stuff; It needs greater sentence structure; there were a couple of sentences, but it wasn’t throughout that there were like word-level problems or grammar problems. It was just like a couple; Sentence-level things are going on; I thought the sentence style and variety was okay even if there was a little bit of a clarity problem sometimes; The sentence when it’s “blah, blah, blah”; he’ll have enough sentences in a row that are okay; sentence level issues, not necessarily syntax; wow sentences, but they’re okay; It’s not like you see something in every sentence or every other sentence or even in every paragraph; I mean it’s a little repetitive, but they’re trying to do connection between sentences; Vague and unclear sentences as well; at least three syntax issues that I saw; If the syntax was there, I would totally be about the 110; but the syntax isn’t there; And the syntax is fine; I had syntax issues;

**Contextual (3):** I think having the choppy sentences; choppy sentences; when they’re connecting thoughts together, the sentences get more complex; I guess about that these things that will be taught in 111, clearly to them, are there too many of them? Are there too many kind of syntax issues?; Like if they are forced to unpack their ideas [in 111], their sentences are actually going to get more complex;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (21):** That’s pretty well executed like complex [sentence] construction followed by [reads from essay]; as far as sentence issues, like it wasn’t the most sophisticated; The sentences were really a problem for me; sentence tangle problems throughout; the unclear sentences and lots of grammar usage mechanics issues more than syntax issues; Can you point to some of the like sentence tangles you were talking about?; it would make the sentence okay; Let me see if I can find some of the sentence stuff that I was having issues with; There were a bunch of sentences like that that were problematic for me; There was sentence level stuff, but they didn’t seem to be big structural things. They were mostly surface, so I’m fine with a 111; Because it seemed like the student because there are other sentences that aren’t as crazy like that are very nice sentences; I mean it’s there, every other sentence begins with “I think” “I believe”; I did see enough variety to make me think that they can vary their sentence structure; changing their sentence structure; some syntax; Some syntax but not severe; I had some syntax stuff; The syntax looked okay for the most part which is why I gave it a plus; I thought it was somewhat writer-based, and there were some syntax things, but that alone wasn’t enough. I didn’t find that to be particularly overwhelming; There are just too many sentence-level things for me; Choppy sentence kind of stuff; This

**Contextual (10):** But as a 112 teacher, I don’t know if I’d want to be teaching that stuff [sentence-level things] in 112; I think that that is something that’s definitely taught in 112 as far as varying your sentence structure; Do you think that this is a student that can pick up these kinds of sentence things in 112? I mean that that’s not the purpose of 112?; it’s also like this is a very long sentence and you’re like, it doesn’t seem to know that that he knows when to punctuate a lot of times like for different reasons; This person knows how to vary their sentences, and that to me, I wonder they’re not very consistent; Well, there are sentences like this one in the second paragraph: “The causes mentioned above while concerning are not as nearly as alarming as the fact that the frequency of their occurrences is and has been increasing exponentially.” This seems very unnatural; I think that [sentences] I almost if that almost arises out of like boredom; I saw enough sentences, let’s see if I can find one that...like I see evidence that they can do it; person knows how to vary their sentences; I didn’t feel like that was a result of syntax so much as
underdevelopment, just like not being able to unpack complex ideas and talk about them, so I felt like the student is going to need, that’s going to be their big thing to work on in 111 is really;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (13):** sentence level errors; like if you were to just read it as far as how the sentences are put together it seems to be okay; I didn’t see the writing as being particularly strong either structure-wise or sentence-wise; I noted the last sentence of paragraph three. [Reads from placement essay]. Well, that’s not…I think it was just the first part of this that was a problem for me; not the best sentences; some sentence-level stuff; some sentence level problems; shows evidence sentence-level sophistication despite some bumps; sentence-level stuff; sentence level errors; there is evidence of better syntax; some syntax issues; And I was going back and forth about the syntax because it seemed to me that there are a lot of comma splices;

**Contextual (1):** the instructor is going to have to remind them to go to the writing center and do some proofreading or if it was going to be more syntax based. This is how we construct sentences. This is what subject verb agreement is;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (1):** couple sentence level problems

**Severity/Amount of Stuff/Enough Things (12)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (3):** Not severe problems; It’s not seeming like these things are severe enough; It’s not like you see something in every sentence or every other sentence or even in every paragraph;

**Contextual (2):** I guess about that these things that will be taught in 111, clearly to them, are there too many of them? Are there too many kind of syntax issues?; There’s choppiness but nothing that’s so overwhelming that the average 111 teacher isn’t going to be able. I don’t think you need special training [in 110] to address the problems that you have here

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (2):** Some syntax but not severe; I thought it was somewhat writer-based, and there were some syntax things, but that alone wasn’t enough. I didn’t find that to be particularly overwhelming;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Contextual (3):** I didn’t know if that was severe enough for a 110; I wasn’t sure if it was severe enough to warrant 110; not quite severe enough to warrant extra 110 time

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (2):** So how do you see the severity, I guess, with this?; enough different kinds of problems for a 110.

**Simplistic (4)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (2):** It’s simplistic; I think that it’s just very simplistic;
Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): it was a very simplistic essay

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): a simple structure

Sophistication (9)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): it would have been a more sophisticated kind of argument; It’s not the most sophisticated, but there’s still an ease in reading it; I still saw lacking sophistication; lacks sophistication;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): the student demonstrates writing ability, pretty sophisticated ability at that, and this is like her way of trying to challenge herself or like do more different kinds of things;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): Not quite sophisticated enough for 112; though it wasn’t that sophisticated,
Contextual (1): there’s an attempt at a more sophisticated structure;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (1): I thought that the biggest issue was lack of sophistication in structure and that 111 would give the student more tools to work with that [lack of sophistication in structure];

Talk About It (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): Which kind of made me veer towards 110 and probably made me want to talk to you about it

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): I just wanted to talk to you about it;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Thesis/Controlling Purpose (31)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (12): That seems to be the controlling purpose; I said that the essay was underdeveloped and drifts from its thesis; the thesis is actually in the last paragraph; And I did not really find a true thesis; You have a great thesis; I had thesis and follows through but it’s a bit too narrative kind of thing (RQ 7); There is a thesis, but I didn’t feel like it was supported; I didn’t see much of a thesis or focus, but there’s enough there; the thesis was stated...like, it wasn’t stated first of all; There was a thesis; The thesis had some problems, but there was a thesis; They didn’t connect back to the thesis which was also a big thing;
Contextual (1): It’s stuff [introduction, conclusion, thesis, focus] she’ll learn in 111;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (4): Like there is a thesis statement and main points; no thesis statement and something like that, that could be a problem; But there is a thesis, and it’s like your five paragraph; I didn’t see any thesis;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (10): Good thesis in last sentence; I said that it had a really weird thesis; I didn’t like the way the thesis was stated; Doesn’t connect back to the thesis enough; Thesis isn’t clearly stated, but the argument is pretty good; There are distinct ideas in support of an argument, but the thesis isn’t clearly stated; No apparent thesis that I could detect; Thesis isn’t clearly stated; I thought there could be better controlling purpose; I said no focus or controlling purpose;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (4): Thesis is in the middle of essay; Thesis is in middle of the essay; Thesis is in middle of the essay; Kids are bombarded by technology. Is that the thesis?; The thing that bothers me the most is that thesis is in the middle of the frickin’ thing; clear thesis;

Thoughts (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): He just needs to learn how to break up thoughts;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (2): that can be definitely taken care of [random thoughts] in 111, I can see the ability to organize thoughts in a cohesive manner;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Voice (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): I have nice voice;
Contextual (2): But that might be them trying to punctuate their voice;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): great voice

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): Has voice;
Contextual (1): I was just enamored with the fact that there was a stronger voice in this essay than most, but as I’m looking at it again, I mean that’s not--they can have a voice in 111, too;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Word Choice/Usage (7)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): He had very strange word choice; The word choice was an issue for me, too; I had word-level issues, second paragraph; word-level problems;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): poor word choice; was just word choice and like; relying too much on certain words or whatever;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Writer Based (11)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (3): I didn’t see the whole thing as being writer-based; there were some writer-based parts; I wouldn’t call this writer-based prose;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (2): that [writer based] would be something that the student would have to work on; There is some writer based; It was a decent attempt that the student has the ability to do okay in 111 once we get this writer-based stuff under control;
**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Contextual (6):** There were some writer-based parts; There’s some writer based prose going on; There’s this writer based prose throughout. “There’s my cousin Brenda, and you know, here’s Bowling Green State stuff.” Like I don’t know; starts out sounding writer based but gets stronger as essay goes on; Writer based prose; Some writer based prose but okay

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

None

**Writing Ability/Knowledge/Attitude of Students (25)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Contextual (7):** Do you think she would really be okay in 112?; I couldn’t see that student entering a 112 class and like not being lost; I don’t think it’s necessarily not knowing the rules but maybe trying to break the rules; I don’t think they really need the extra time; I think basically the kid could do okay in 112, but I don’t want to say she could be in 112?; I think he’ll do okay in 111; I think she’ll be fine in 111;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Contextual (3):** the student can do it; That’s just laziness; But also seems to know really what she’s doing;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Contextual (15):** But maybe with revision; But these are things that can be picked up in 111; I saw signs of 112 ability; I saw the ability to be in 111; there’s a basic understanding there, but are you talking about “peer pressure,” or are you talking about “technology?”; I think that there’s enough skill here demonstrated to justify a 111; I think that they should be fine in 111; I think the student is trying and failing at things as opposed to just failing; I think they’d be okay in 111; If this note is true, and she did lose her first paper, I can see the ability to organize thoughts in a cohesive manner; it shows evidence of ability even if the essay isn’t pulled together inadequately; seems to understand; should be okay in 111; should be okay in 111; they’re attempting some things; There was good writing ability; will do well in 111; would probably do okay in 111;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

None
Pair 2: 111 Frequency Codebooks

Each codebook contains the frequency that each individual criterion was invoked in placement discussions overall, in borderline discussions, and in discussions during the first half (June 12-June 22) and second half (June 26-July 19) of the Placement Program. Frequencies are meant to be general approximations; all frequencies are rounded up to the nearest half-point; therefore, the frequencies in any given codebook do not total 100%.

Overall
Sentences/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Syntax: 10%
Development/Support: 8%
Argument: 7%
Paragraphs: 5%
Introduction/Conclusion: 4%
Thesis/Controlling Purpose: 4%
Focus/Drift: 4%
Writing Ability/Knowledge/Attitude of Students: 3.5%
Audience/Reader Awareness: 3%
Benefit/Need/Ready For/Gain: 3%
Ability/Responsiveness of Instructors: 2%
Grammar/Usage/Mechanics: 2%
Commas: 2%
Choppiness of Writing/Prose: 2%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 2%
Severity/Amount of Stuff/Enough Things: 2%
Repetition: 2%
Clarity/Readability: 1.5%
Writer Based: 1.5%
Article/Source: 1.5%
Prompt/Topic (RQ 7): 1%
Voice: 1%
Ideas: 1%
Language: 1%
Logic/Reasoning: 1%
Word Choice/Usage: 1%
Sophistication: 1%
Drafts/Papers: 1%
Comfortable with Placement: 1%
Communication: 1%
Counterargument: 1%
Critical Thinking: 1%
Main Points/Supporting Points: 0.5%
Simplistic: 0.5%
Mean/Nice/Generous: 0.5%
Narrative (RQ 7): 0.5%
Comma Splices: < 0.5%
Creativity: < 0.5%
Curricular Exemplars (RQ 8): < 0.5%
Generalizations/Sexist Language: < 0.5%
Notes: < 0.5%
Point of View Shifts: < 0.5%
Report (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Talk About It: < 0.5%
Thoughts: < 0.5%
Borderlines

Sentence/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Syntax: 8%
Argument: 7.5%
Development/Support: 7%
Focus/Drift: 5%
Introduction/Conclusion: 5%
Thesis/Controlling Purpose: 5%
Writing Ability/Knowledge/Attitude of Students: 5%
Paragraphs: 5%
Audience/Reader Awareness: 3%
Benefit/Need/Ready For/Gain: 3%
Ability/Responsiveness of Instructors: 2%
Article/Source: 2%
Choppiness of Writing/Prose: 2%
Severity/Amount of Stuff/Enough Things: 2%
Clarity/Readability: 2%
Commas: 2%
Writer Based: 2%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 2%
Word Choice/Usage: 1.5%
Communication: 1.5%
Sophistication: 1.5%
Comfortable with Placement: 1%
Grammar/Usage/Mechanics: 1%
Ideas: 1%
Voice: 1%
Counterargument: 1%
Critical Thinking: 1%
Drafts/Papers: 1%
Prompt/Topic (RQ 7): 1%
Repetition: 1%
Comma Splices: 0.5%
Thoughts: 0.5%
Language: 0.5%
Creativity: < 0.5%
Curricular Exemplars (RQ 8): < 0.5%
Generalizations/Sexist Language: < 0.5%
Logic/Reasoning: < 0.5%
Main Points/Supporting Points: < 0.5%
Mean/Nice/Generous: < 0.5%
Narrative (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Notes: < 0.5%
Point of View Shifts: < 0.5%
Report (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Simplistic: < 0.5%
Talk About It: < 0.5%
First Half

Sentences/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Syntax: 13%
Development/Support: 10%
Argument: 7%
Paragraphs: 6%
Thesis/Controlling Purpose: 4%
Audience/Reader Awareness: 3.5%
Commas: 3%
Benefit/Need/Ready For/Gain: 2.5%
Choppiness of Writing/Prose: 2.5%
Counterargument: 2%
Focus/Drift: 2%
Grammar/Usage/Mechanics: 2%
Introduction/Conclusion: 2%
Comfortable with Placement: 2%
Severity/Amount of Stuff/Enough Things: 2%
Writing Ability/Knowledge/Attitude of Students: 2%
Repetition: 2%
Clarity/Readability: 1.5%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 1.5%
Ability/Responsiveness of Instructors: 1%
Article/Source: 1%
Ideas: 1%
Language: 1%
Logic/Reasoning: 1%
Main Points/Supporting Points: 1%
Mean/Nice/Generous: 1%
Narrative (RQ 7): 1%
Sophistication: 1%
Prompt/Topic (RQ 7): 1%
Voice: 1%
Word Choice/Usage: 1%
Writer Based: 1%
Critical Thinking: 0.5%
Generalizations/Sexist Language: 0.5%
Point of View Shifts: 0.5%
Report (RQ 7): 0.5%
Simplistic: 0.5%
Curricular Exemplars: < 0.5%
Comma Splices: < 0.5%
Communication: < 0.5%
Creativity: < 0.5%
Drafts/Papers: < 0.5%
Notes: < 0.5%
Talk About It: < 0.5%
Thoughts: < 0.5%
Second Half

Argument: 7%
Focus/Drift: 7%
Introduction/Conclusion: 7%
Thesis/Controlling Purpose: 5%
Sentences/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Syntax: 5%
Writing Ability/Knowledge/Attitude of Students: 5%
Development/Support: 5%
Benefit/Need/Ready For/Gain: 3.5%
Ability/Responsiveness of Instructors: 3%
Paragraphs: 3%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 3%
Repetition: 2.5%
Article/Source: 2%
Grammar/Usage/Mechanics: 2%
Audience/Reader Awareness: 2%
Clarity/Readability: 2%
Communication: 2%
Commas: 2%
Writer Based: 2%
Severity/Amount of Stuff/Enough Things: 2%
Choppiness of Writing/Prose: 1.5%
Comma Splices: 1%
Critical Thinking: 1%
Curricular Exemplars: 1%
Ideas: 1%
Language: 1%
Word Choice/Usage: 1%
Sophistication: 1%
Thoughts: 0.5%
Voice: 0.5%
Counterargument: < 0.5%
Comfortable with Placement: < 0.5%
Creativity: < 0.5%
Drafts/Papers: < 0.5%
Generalizations/Sexist Language: < 0.5%
Logic/Reasoning: < 0.5%
Main Points/Supporting Points: < 0.5%
Mean/Nice/Generous: < 0.5%
Narrative (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Notes: < 0.5%
Point of View Shifts: < 0.5%
Prompt/Topic (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Report (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Talk About It: < 0.5%
Simplistic: < 0.5%
Pair 2
112 Placement Criteria Glossary

The abbreviation “T” refers to the textual definition of each criterion, and the abbreviation “C” refers to the contextual definition of each criterion. The abbreviation “RQ” refers to particular supporting research questions in the study.

**Argument:** T. Essays contain good, overstated, hidden, strong, subtle, effective, and/or ineffective arguments. C. The online writing placement test’s instructions impeded writers’ arguments.

**Article/Source:** T. The essays’ references to the articles or sources are clear, good, unclear, and/or overused. C. Writers can learn proper source use in English 112. Writers overuse sources and need to learn to introduce them more effectively.

**Audience/Reader Awareness:** T. Essays demonstrate good and strong audience awareness. C. Writers had a clear idea of their audiences.

**Benefit/Need:** C. Writers can benefit from instruction in English 111 or English 112. Writers can address particular issues, such as execution, through revision in English 112.

**Body Paragraphs:** T. Body paragraphs are unfocused.

**Clarity/Readability:** T. Essays are clear or lack clarity. C. Writers may not understand what they are writing or they need help to understand their writing.

**Cohesiveness/Cogency:** T. Essays demonstrate cohesiveness or lack of cohesiveness.

**Comparing Essays:** C. Evaluators compare essays to previous essays in making placement decisions.

**Could Be Talked Into/Talk with You:** C. Evaluators indicate a willingness to be persuaded into placing writers into English 111, and indicate a desire to talk about placement decisions for clarification.

**Counterargument:** T. Essays contain counterarguments. C. Writers demonstrate knowledge of counterarguments, which they will not need to learn in English 111.

**Critical Thinking:** T. Essays demonstrate advanced, complex, great, underdeveloped or developed, awesome, and/or good critical thinking. C. Writers demonstrate complex thoughts and critical thinking skills and creativity.

**Development:** T. Essays contain nice, great, specific, solid, and dense development; essays are also underdeveloped. C. Essays are well developed in term of the GSW rubric. Writers will need to revise to cut out overdeveloped elements. Writers may benefit from work on development in English 111.
Essay Basics/Essay Structure/Essay Organization/Five Paragraph Essay: T. The essays include well-executed, sophisticated, advanced, and unsophisticated five paragraph essays. The essays structure and organization are great, well-executed, advanced, fresh, typical, and effective. C. Writers show what they can do on an admissions essay and demonstrate the ability to convey complex thoughts.

Examples/Support/Use of Sources for Support: T. Essays are supported with good and/or specific examples. C. Writers can learn to use sources for support in English 112.

Execution: T. Essays are well executed though formulaic. C. Writers could learn execution in English 112.

Exciting/Boring/Not Fabulous/Love/Creative: T. Essays are boring, exciting, compelling, dry, fabulous, and creative. C. Writers can succeed in English 112 due to their critical thinking skills.

Focus: T. Essays demonstrate great focus or lack focus.

Formula: T. Essays are formulaic or follow a sophisticated formula.

Grammar: T. Essays contain grammatical issues, but they are not pervasive. C. Writers could correct grammatical errors through revision in English 112.

Ideas: T. Ideas are vague, nice, original, different, or complex.

Imperfect: T. Essays are not perfect.

Introduction/Conclusion: T. Introduction and/or conclusions are skimpy, weak, missing, awesome, strong, weak, buried, and well done. C. Writers have trouble writing conclusions, and evaluators speculate that most students’ conclusions are weak.

Language: T. Language control is lofty, and language is unnecessarily lofty.

Metadiscourse/Transitions: T. Metadiscourse and transitions were off, good, lacking, adequate, nice, formulaic, impressive, great, not smooth, okay, and basic. C. Writers can improve metadiscourse and transitions in English 111.

Narrative: T. Essays employ narrative.

Paragraphs: T. The essays’ paragraphs are lovely, good, disconnected, and underdeveloped. Paragraph transitions were not smooth or absent.

Placement Exam: C. Writers essays were weaker due to the 24-hour time constraint of the online placement exam.

Rubric Criteria: C. Writers are placed in English 112 because they are strong in all of the GSW rubric categories.
**Sentences/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Syntax:** T. Essays contain lovely sentences, sentence variety, sentence trouble, unclear sentences, and syntax problems. C. Writers correctly use complex sentence constructions. Writers may benefit from English 111 due to sentence-level concerns.

**Sophistication:** T. Essays exhibit sophistication in structure, prose, and argument. Essays exhibit either sophisticated or unsophisticated qualities. C. Writers demonstrate sophisticated writing abilities.

**Talked About It:** C. Evaluators indicate a desire to talk about placement decisions for clarification.

**Thesis/Controlling Purpose:** T. Theses are good, weighted, unclear, clear, great, and good. Theses contain syntactical issues. Some paragraphs are not connected to the controlling purpose.

**Voice:** T. Writers demonstrate a nice and great voice. C. English 112 instructors talk about the balance of voice, which will help the writers with voice.

**Writing Ability/Skill Level/Attitude/Potential of Students:** C. Writers demonstrate advanced, impressive, sophisticated, good, and wonderful writing abilities. They are cognitively ready for English 112 and demonstrate writing strengths in all of the rubric categories, and they would not struggle in the course after the first essay. Writers are ready for English 112, and may be bored in English 111 and question their placements.

**Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary:** T. Essays contain vocabulary issues and forced word choice. C. English 112 instructors can help writers improve their word choice.
Pair 2
112 Placement Criteria Glossary and In Vivo Examples

The following “Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples” corresponds to the preceding “Placement Criteria Glossary.” The in vivo examples for each criterion were studied, criterion-by-criterion, and the preceding glossary containing textual and/or contextual definitions of each individual criterion was written. Numbers in parenthesis note the number of times each criterion was invoked overall and according to the following categories: “Borderlines First Time Period,” “Disagreements First Time Period,” “Borderlines Second Time Period,” and “Disagreements Second Time Period.”

Argument (13)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (6): Nicely argues; there were some overstated arguments; It’s a good argument; Not really argument, but that’s probably due to the prompt (RQ 7); argument is a bit hidden in the body; strength of argument needs work; Persuasive
Contextual (1): Not really argument, but that’s probably due to the prompt (RQ 7);

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): It has an actual progression of an argument; there’s a subtle argument, which showed some sophistication to me;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): I thought that it was a very effective argument structure; it fails effective for an audience due to lack of transitions and underdeveloped points;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Article/Source (22)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): some unclear references to the article;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (9): unclear references to the article; They did mention the article title, they just didn’t do the whole like author; some sort of unclear references to the article but not really; they’re using examples shows how good they will be able to use sources, you know, great use of sources and examples; good examples; good support and use of source material; source issues; they way they are incorporating sources;
Contextual (1): I said source usage low, but that’s something you can learn in;
Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (5): Some unclear references to the article; Cause there’s more source usage there; Needs to use sources better; That was my main thing that he seemed to be overusing the article; They did mention the article title, they just didn’t do the whole like author; Contextual (6): Uses article okay but might be overusing but will succeed in 111; It just seemed that he was overusing that article, which I guess could be taught in 112; That’s not even in the article and kind of thinking on their own; I think her only other major problem is use of sources and that is obviously something that is more concentrated in 112, and she's already using sources; She just needs to introduce them better; I’m thinking there is more source usage in 112, and if that’s all he needs to learn, and he knows how to use the source;

Audience/Reader Awareness (9)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): audience awareness things; good audience awareness;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (4): very aware of her audience; audience awareness high; audience in there; good audience control;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): some audience issues, but minor in comparison to this great essay;
Contextual (1): I thought he had a really clear idea of who his audience was;

Benefit/Need (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (6): The things that I have written down here could be addressed in 112; they could learn these kinds of execution things in a 112 class setting, you know, and that in revision, they could easily have those; they could benefit, like they could still get something out of 111, but it’s not that they can’t get that out of 112, too; What would they benefit from a 111 is what we need to think about?; Like the things that they need, they can get out of 112; maybe with revision, the student would be able fix those things, but at the same time, like will it also end up hurting that student in a 112 placement;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Body Paragraphs (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): but argument is a bit hidden in the body [paragraphs]

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): the body paragraphs are very disconnected;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Clarity/Readability (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): clarity
Contextual (1): I would have to reread sentences because I was like, “Do you know what you’re saying?”;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): “What? I don’t understand. Uberchild why?”; if it was clear to you;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (2): I think if you have to sit and read it aloud, he’d be like, “Oh. Yeah. Yeah. You’re right. That doesn’t make sense”; not being able to complete his own thought;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Cohesiveness/Cogency (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): It wasn’t as cohesive as I would have liked; it [writing] wasn’t quite tied together;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): it’s a very cogent, cohesive piece;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): Good cogency; not adequately connected together.

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Comparing Essays (5)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): enough for me to go 111 especially in light of the other ones we have been putting in 112, I guess

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (4): Like especially compared to this 112; This was another one similar to that other one we just put in 112;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Could Be Talked Into/Talk with You (10)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (6): I could be talked into a low 112; I’m willing to be talked into a 112; I could probably be talked into a 112; I just needed to be talked into it; I just wanted to talk about it with you; I’m willing to be talked into a 112;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (3): You talked me down to 111 and then you talked both of us back to 112; I wanted to talk about it with you; Because we like to talk about things;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): I’m kind of thinking now, now that we’re talking it through, a low 112;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Counterargument (8)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (4): You get a little bit of a counterargument with a rebuttal kind of thing; there wasn’t that little bit of counterargument there; It brings up counterarguments; I said there’s a counterargument;
Contextual (4): the knowledge of the counterargument; it’s like they’re going to be sitting there just working on transitions all semester?; they don’t even have that to learn [counterargument] in 111; knowledge of counterargument;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Critical Thinking (20)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): the writing and critical thinking is advanced enough that even though this is a formulaic example; with lovely sentences and critical thinking;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): she shows evidence of, I guess, complex thoughts and being able to articulate them well and be able to organize them well;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (12): Great critical thinking; great critical thinking; I didn’t even think it was really underdeveloped; it’s well-developed; I have well-developed; There’s good development; good development; I know in the past when we’ve had this kind of development in a balance, like a balance/development kind of issue; some development is needed; great dense development; Okay development; Good…thinking;
Contextual (2): the student can do it especially with the critical thinking that’s kind of shown through the creativeness of writing; Critical thinking skills are there;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): I had good critical thinking; Wow. That’s awesome critical thinking right there; I remember me these standing out to me as well as critical thinking, and those were very 112y; I think with the critical thinking skills;

Development (32)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (10): I said it’s a nicely developed typical essay; Nicely organized and developed; Nicely developed; very nicely developed; nicely developed; great development; development; great… development; second paragraph needed some development; Still in need of something;
Contextual (2): thinking in terms of the rubric for 111, it’s really well-developed;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): Development…was great;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (10): well-developed points; the specificity of the points; points are solid; I thought that it was underdeveloped; underdeveloped points; there’s not much writing here; there’s not much
writing; I almost feel like it’s overdeveloped in some ways, too; it’s a little thin; it’s overdeveloped in some ways, too;

Contextual (3): This is someone that is going to have to learn that revision sometimes means cutting down [overdeveloped]; in a revision, that development could come through, you know; it just seems like they didn’t write too much cause they had so many points to make;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (4): It’s very densely developed; I mean it is very underdeveloped; It worries me how underdeveloped it is; underdeveloped;
Contextual (2): I’m fine with a 111 because I think that the student could gain stuff from 111 especially in the area of development, but she will do really well in 111; in a class where there going to be doing research and synthesis and stuff like that, the development will probably be there;

Essay Basics/Essay Structure/Essay Organization/Five Paragraph Essay (49)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (18): the overall essay showed pretty sophisticated ability even if the final product isn’t perfect; I thought the essay was very effective even though it wasn’t particularly sophisticated; it is a five paragraph essay; she says it in her essay; this essay demonstrated that he had good metadiscourse, excellent language control, clarity, complexity of ideas; it’s a nicely developed typical essay; it is a five paragraph theme, but it’s a very sophisticated five paragraph theme; I think you could just say to the student, you know, well-executed five paragraph; still five paragraph; I thought it was a pretty executed five paragraph; it is a five paragraph essay, but well executed; I mean it’s still a five paragraph; it’s much better argued than many of the five paragraphs; it’s a darn well-executed five paragraph; it was a really well-executed five paragraph; organization, development, logic and everything I thought was pretty good; Great… organization; Nicely organized;
Contextual (2): They’re probably just trying to show what they can do for their college admissions essay; you need more than five paragraphs because this is a five page paper;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): well-developed five-paragraph essay; well-organized; well-organized without being cookie cutter;
Contextual (1): she shows evidence of, I guess, complex thoughts and being able to articulate them well and be able to organize them well

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (17): I thought it was pretty well-executed five paragraph; too much of a standard five paragraph essay; those [five paragraphs] seemed more advanced to me; we would feel like this were a more sophisticated five paragraph essay; Well-executed five paragraph; It seemed too standard for me; It wasn’t just the standard essay; I just thought that the organization was so fresh; has an organization; Pretty typical structure and organization; Standard organization and structure; Standard organization; The formulaic structure; effective argument structure; nice structure; Pretty typical structure; It was really was really well-organized;
Contextual (1): But we have put five paragraphs into 112;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (7): I loved this essay; I really liked it [essay]; I kept reading it [the essay] because I was interested; this great essay; I said pretty basic essay; It was five paragraphs; Still it didn’t seem five paragraphs;

Examples/Support/Use of Sources for Support (17)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): uses great examples; the writing and critical thinking is advanced enough that even though this is a formulaic example; nice support

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (11): Good use of examples; Great…examples; good specific examples; good examples; the examples that they use is really good; they’re using examples shows how good they will be able to use sources, you know, good things here including specific examples; great use of sources and examples; good examples; good support and use of source material; source issues; they way they are incorporating sources;
Contextual (1): I said source usage low, but that’s something you can learn in 112;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): some good examples; I did talk about the examples and I see I remember me these standing out to me as well;

Execution (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): nicely executed;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): I thought it was pretty well-executed although formulaic; I thought that the execution faltered in several spots; pretty well-executed although formulaic;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): has some execution problems;
Contextual (1): they could learn these kinds of execution things in a 112 class setting, you know, and that in revision, they could easily have those;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Exciting/Boring/Not Fabulous/Love/Creative (9)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (6): It’s a little boring; And does it have to be exciting?; It wasn’t compelling to me; It’s a little dry; I didn’t think it was fabulous; Very creative; Creative; I love this essay

Contextual (2): 111 isn’t going to make them a more exciting writer; the student can do it especially with the critical thinking that’s kind of shown through the creativeness of writing;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Exit Ability (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (2): I see a lot of students who are striving to get to this point by the end; there are a lot of students, from at least my experience teaching 111, if you can get them to this point by the end, you’re happy;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): I thought that it seemed like an exit 111 essay, like something you would see towards the end of 111;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Focus (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): I felt that they didn’t stay as focused as I would have preferred;

Disagreements First Time Period
None
Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (4): Focus; I said it was a really great focus; the fact that they focus on the internet the entire time was a big plus; very very focused argument;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): Focus;

Formula (4)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): this is a formulaic example; it was a little bit formulaic; it was a sophisticated formula;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): pretty well-executed although formulaic;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Grammar (4)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): there are some random grammar stuff;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): some sort of grammar thingies;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): grammatically kind of incomplete; They’re [grammatical errors] not pervasive throughout;
Contextual (1): a revision kind of thing, you know, would be okay [to help the student with grammatical errors];

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Ideas (8)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): Complexity of Ideas

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): there was a lot of vague language and ideas;
Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (6): as far as the overall metadiscourse within paragraphs and linking ideas together within each paragraph, I thought were pretty good; has these ideas; great ideas; nice ideas; the ideas; I mean they’re [ideas] very different. They’re [ideas] original;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Improper (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (1): it’s not perfect

Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (1): it’s not perfect

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Introduction/Conclusion (20)

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (6): he actually says “In conclusion” right there; conclusion is buried; Kind of an odd or unsatisfying conclusion; you get to it [conclusion] and your like “ohhhhh!”; really good introduction; the introduction is so well done;

Contextual (2): Dude, “Where’s the conclusion?”; Maybe they just have a problem with conclusions;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (11): Conclusion; a skimpy introduction and conclusion; conclusion falls short; the conclusion is weak; missing conclusion; I said excellent introduction; there’s a skimpy introduction and conclusion; great introduction!; the introduction’s awesome; starts off strong; I would have felt a little bit more comfortable seeing a weaker beginning and seeing it get stronger;

Contextual (1): what’s students’ conclusions aren’t weak?;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Language (9)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): excellent language control; Unnecessarily lofty language;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): vague language; Good control like language control;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (4): good language control; strength of his language control; Good language control; good audience control and language control;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): Language control is great overall;

Metadiscourse/Transitions (51)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (16): I would have liked to have seen some more metadiscourse to tie together for a 112er; My issue was needing some transitions and metadiscourse; the transitions and metadiscourse could have better; transitions and metadiscourse where a little bit off; he had good metadiscourse; good transitions; My issue was needing some transitions and metadiscourse; The one thing that kept me out of 112 was the transitions; there were no transitions that were really adequate; the transitions and metadiscourse could have better; the transitions and metadiscourse where a little bit off; Nice transitions; the thing that kept me in 111 was the transitions; nice transitions; I thought that the transitions worked, but I didn’t see them as being because they’re basically only using also; transitions and strength of argument needs work;
Contextual (3): Do you think the major problem being metadiscourse, that that would be enough for a student to stay in 111?; if that’s all that this really needs are transitions and a different structure, then I think that 111 would be overkill for her; Poor transitions but that could be taught in 112 possibly;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (7): It had nice metadiscourse, which I was impressed with. I thought that the paragraph transitions could have been smoother; My thing was transitions; I thought the transitions were good; I’m looking at the transitions again, and there’s two that bother me, not the whole thing, you know; transitions are lacking; There weren’t any transitions that I saw between paragraphs; The transitions are definitely lacking;
Contextual (1): Transitions are going to be an issue, but that’s something she can work on in 112;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (18): Still needs some transitions in metadiscourse; as far as the overall metadiscourse within paragraphs and linking ideas together within each paragraph, I thought were pretty good; needs more metadiscourse; Good metadiscourse in that one, I thought; the metadiscourse; It really needs transitions; The transitions should better, but there are signs; I feel like if the student
had smoother transitions here; lack of transitions; transitions are needed; okay transitions; okay transitions; there weren’t the greatest transitions; needs some work on transitions; good transitions; very basic transitions; okay transitions; this is pretty good transitions for someone; Contextual (3): I think that just having transitions and metadiscourse kind of stuff, like, could be easily taken…I mean like…I just feel like they get that down in one essay [in 112] ; there wouldn’t be a whole lot to gain in 111 other than transitions; there wouldn’t be a whole lot to gain in 111 other than transitions, which would be kind of a silly reason to take 111;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): great transitions; the transitions; I think the transitions are there, too

Narrative (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): use of narrative (RQ 7); Here’s my narrative (RQ 7);

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Paragraphs (10)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (6): the paragraphs were lovely; the writing is really good on a paragraph by paragraph basis; I saw the paragraphs as being disconnected (textual); I thought that this one paragraph drifting away from the purpose [Reads quickly from essay.] And so that to, that’s kind of, and then they were back on it in the next paragraph; it’s just like one paragraph; that’s one paragraph; The only thing I thought was like that second paragraph needed some development;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): I thought that the paragraph transitions could have been smoother; There weren’t any transitions that I saw between paragraphs;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): I think this paragraph is what really sold me because I was just like, Wow. That’s awesome critical thinking right there;
Placement Exam (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): Especially in a 24 hour time frame [taking the placement test]:

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): this is also a kind of time constraints of sort. The 24-hour period [for the placement exam]

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Rubric Criteria (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (2): they were strong in all the rubric categories enough to justify [a 112]; thinking in terms of the rubric for 111, it’s really well-developed;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Sentences/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Syntax (17)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (8): lovely sentences; I would have to reread sentences; there was some sentence trouble toward the end; Also had sentence variety; the sentence-level; The overall sentence structure; nice variety; Also had sentence variety;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (6): Scattered sentence level issues; sentence level issues may be a problem; the structure of the sentences weren’t like the best, you know; Syntax issues in thesis; syntax; he few instances of syntax problems seemed overwhelming to me at first;
Contextual (3): there are some sentences here, but there are some other ones that are pretty complex constructions that he manages just fine; enough sentences problems that this student might really benefit from 111; he also has some more complex constructions pulled off correctly;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Sophistication (17)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (6): it’s a very sophisticated five paragraph theme; I saw the writing as being pretty sophisticated; I thought the essay was very effective even though it wasn’t particularly sophisticated; Not always sophisticated; but isn’t sophisticated enough; not overly sophisticated in overall structure; it was a sophisticated formula; it was really sophisticated;
Contextual (3): shows sophistication beyond 111; I thought, showed sophisticated ability; but the overall essay showed pretty sophisticated ability even if the final product isn’t perfect;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (4): it wasn’t as sophisticated in structure; the structure isn’t very well sophisticated; I wasn’t sure about the sophistication of it; there’s a subtle argument, which showed some sophistication to me;
Contextual (1): it just didn’t seem sophisticated to me; but with the some of the more sophisticated paper, but I’m just worried that they might, that she might shut off at one point, “Why am I even in this class?” and be more resistant;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): I feel like if the student had smoother transitions here, that we would feel like this were a more sophisticated five paragraph essay; Pretty good essay though not particularly sophisticated;
Contextual (1): there is some pretty relatively sophisticated writing ability here;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Talked About It (8)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (5): I could be talked into a low 112; I’m willing to be talked into a 112; I just needed to be talked into it; I could probably be talked into a 112; I just wanted to talk about it with you;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): I wanted to talk about it with you; Because we like to talk about things;
Borderlines Second Time Period

**Contextual (2):** I can be talked into a 111; I’m kind of thinking now, now that we’re talking it through, a low 112;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**None**

**Thesis/Controlling Purpose (14)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (7):** The problems I saw first of all were that I thought that this one paragraph drifting away from the purpose [Reads quickly from essay.] And so that to, that’s kind of, and then they were back on it [purpose] in the next paragraph; there’s also a really good thesis; I liked that there was a weighted thesis; I thought the thesis could have been clearer; I saw clear thesis; I said “great thesis”; But there’s also a really good thesis;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**None**

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (6):** I thought there was just a killer thesis; Good thesis; thesis; Syntax issues in thesis; there was a problem in the thesis; controlling purpose;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (1):** Excellent thesis

**Voice (6)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (1):** Great voice

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (2):** Nice voice; voice was great

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (2):** nice voice; nice voice;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Contextual (1):** And we talk about the balance of your voice in 112;

**Writing Ability/Skill Level/Attitude/Potential of Students (38)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Contextual (24):** the writing and critical thinking is advanced enough that even though this is a formulaic example; the writing is really good on a paragraph by paragraph basis (textual); it [writing] wasn’t quite tied together; impressive writing ability; the writing as being pretty
sophisticated; Writing is pretty good; wonderful prose but not sort of writing for 112; wonderful prose but not sort of writing for 112 (textual); well written for the most part; I think that ability wise, it’s there; I think that maybe we’re just being a little overly like, “you could have done so much better”; I think the student is a good enough writer; I think the student is cognitively ready for 112; shows excellent ability in all the rubric categories; I thought, showed sophisticated ability; but the overall essay showed pretty sophisticated ability even if the final product isn’t perfect; the student can write; the student could learn in 112 very quickly I think; But to me, like that was the big thing. I was like, “you’ve done so well”; once the student got it, which might take two papers, but after two papers, then that student's like “okay!” Whereas they can learn it within the first paper of 112 possibly; the student should be in 112; I feel *** would be okay; the student should be in 112; the writing ability, the structure and the sentence-level, like they were strong in all the rubric categories enough to justify [a 112];

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (5): I don’t think she would struggle that much in 112. I think she’d get, the first essay might be hard for her, but then she would succeed very quickly; I feel like the writing shows the student is ready to be challenged in 112; the amount of work she put into this shows that she would be willing to put in the amount of work into a 112 because just the length of this, and not that that’s saying anything, but the very nicely structured length of this; It [essay] wasn’t shouting at me, “The student’s ready for 112”;’ I think they might feel kind of bored towards the beginning of the semester [in 111], but with the some of the more sophisticated paper, but I’m just worried that they might, that she might shut off at one point, “Why am I even in this class?” and be more resistant;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (7): I think she would be okay in 112; the ability is here; This writer seems to have the ability to write; I wasn’t sure that the student was ready. I felt like they needed to practice more; Do you think part way through 111, they’d be like, “Why am I here?”; there is potential here for them [in 112]; given that student more practice [in 111], so by the time it got to;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (2): I think [she] is ready for 112; I’m wondering if told they have to write a four to five page paper [in 112], that they could do it, but I don’t want to assume that at the same time;

Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): vocabulary issues; Forced word choice; Very forced word choice;
Contextual (1): it would just take an instructor saying, “You know what? You can work on your word choice”;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): word choice; word-level kind of stuff
Disagreements Second Time Period
None
**Pair 2: 112 Frequency Codebooks**

Each codebook contains the frequency that each individual criterion was invoked in placement discussions overall, in borderline discussions, and in discussions during the first half (June 12-June 22) and second half (June 26-July 19) of the Placement Program. Frequencies are meant to be general approximations; all frequencies are rounded up to the nearest half-point; therefore, the frequencies in any given codebook do not total 100%.

**Overall**


Metadiscourse/Transitions: 11%

Writing Ability/Skill Level/Attitude/Potential of Students: 8%

Development: 7%

Article/Source: 5%

Critical Thinking: 4.5%

Sentences/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Syntax: 4%

Examples/Support/Use of Sources for Support: 4%

Sophistication: 4%

Argument: 3%

Thesis/Controlling Purpose: 3%

Exciting/Boring/Not Fabulous/Love/Creative: 2%

Audience/Reader Awareness: 2%

Could Be Talked Into/Talk with You: 2%

Counterargument: 2%

Language: 2%

Ideas: 2%

Paragraphs: 2%

Talked About It: 2%

Benefit/Need: 1%

Voice: 1%

Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary: 1%

Clarity/Readability: 1%

Cohesiveness/Cogency: 1%

Comparing Essays: 1%

Execution: 1%

Exit Ability: 1%

Focus: 1%

Formula: 1%

Grammar: 1%

Body Paragraphs: < 0.5%

Introduction/Conclusion: 0.5%

Imperfect: < 0.5%

Narrative (RQ 7): < 0.5%

Placement Exam: < 0.5%

Rubric Criteria: < 0.5%
Borderlines

Metadiscourse/Transitions: 11%
Writing Ability/Skill Level/Attitude/Potential of Students: 9%
Development: 7%
Introduction/Conclusion: 5.5%
Sentences/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Syntax: 5%
Critical Thinking: 4%
Sophistication: 4%
Thesis/Controlling Purpose: 4%
Examples/Support/Use of Sources for Support: 4%
Article/Source: 3%
Argument: 2.5%
Audience/Reader Awareness: 2%
Ideas: 2%
Benefit/Need: 2%
Exciting/Boring/Not Fabulous/Love/Creative: 2%
Could Be Talked Into/Talk with You: 2%
Counterargument: 2%
Language: 2%
Paragraphs: 2%
Talked About It: 2%
Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary: 2%
Clarity/Readability: 1%
Cohesiveness/Cogency: 1%
Comparing Essays: 1%
Execution: 1%
Exit Ability: 1%
Focus: 1%
Formula: 1%
Grammar: 1%
Rubric Criteria: 1%
Voice: 1%
Narrative (RQ 7): 0.5%
Imperfect: < 0.5%
Placement Exam: < 0.5%
Body Paragraphs: < 0.5%
First Half

Writing Ability/Skill Level/Attitude/Potential of Students: 14%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 13%
Sophistication: 7%
Development: 6%
Argument: 5%
Introduction/Conclusion: 4%
Paragraphs: 4%
Sentences/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Syntax: 4%
Could Be Talked Into/Talk with You: 4%
Talked About It: 3%
Thesis/Controlling Purpose: 3%
Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary: 2%
Execution: 2%
Formula: 2%
Cohesiveness/Cogency: 2%
Language: 2%
Clarity/Readability: 2%
Examples/Support/Use of Sources for Support: 2%
Critical Thinking: 1.5%
Audience/Reader Awareness: 1%
Rubric Criteria: 1%
Voice: 1%
Grammar: 1%
Ideas: 1%
Article/Source: 0.5%
Placement Exam: 0.5%
Body Paragraphs: 0.5%
Imperfect: 0.5%
Comparing Essays: 0.5%
Focus: 0.5%
Benefit/Need: < 0.5%
Counterargument: < 0.5%
Exciting/Boring/Not Fabulous/Love/Creative: < 0.5%
Narrative (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Second Half

Metadiscourse/Transitions: 10%
Article/Source: 9%
Development: 8%
Critical Thinking: 7%
Introduction/Conclusion: 5%
Writing Ability/Skill Level/Attitude/Potential of Students: 4%
Sentences/Sentence Structure/Sentence Variety/Syntax: 4%
Audience/Reader Awareness: 3%
Counterargument: 3%
Exciting/Boring/Not Fabulous/Love/Creative: 3%
Thesis/Controlling Purpose: 3%
Benefit/Need: 2.5%
Ideas: 2.5%
Argument: 2%
Focus: 2%
Language: 2%
Comparing Essays: 2%
Examples/Support/Use of Sources for Support: 2%
Clarity/Readability: 1%
Cohesiveness/Cogency: 1%
Grammar: 1%
Sophistication: 1%
Talked About It: 1%
Voice: 1%
Execution: 1%
Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary: 1%
Body Paragraphs: < 0.5%
Could Be Talked Into/Talk with You: < 0.5%
Formula: < 0.5%
Imperfect: < 0.5%
Narrative (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Paragraphs: < 0.5%
Placement Exam: < 0.5%
Rubric Criteria: < 0.5%
The abbreviation “T” refers to the textual definition of each criterion, and the abbreviation “C” refers to the contextual definition of each criterion. The abbreviation “RQ” refers to particular supporting research questions in the study.

**Apostrophes: T.** Essays contain missing and misused apostrophes.

**Argument: T.** Essays contain argumentative structure and buried arguments. Narrative and report structures are used rather than argumentative structures. **C.** Writers’ arguments are clear and creative. Writers may not understand argumentation.

**Article/Attribution/Quotation/Source Citations: T.** Essays acknowledge, quote, and/or attribute sources although not always accurately. **C.** Writers attempt to counterargue the article, demonstrate an understanding of source material, focus on the essay, and responded directly to the article provided by the online placement test.

**Audience/Reader-Based: T.** Essays acknowledge or do not acknowledge an audience of readers.

**Benefit/Need: T.** Writers would benefit from extra time in English 110 to get one-on-one attention with the instructor and work on grammatical issues.

**Choppiness of Writing: T.** Essays contain repeatedly short and choppy sentences.

**Clarity/Readability: T.** Essays are unclear, unfocused, disorganized, and/or grammatically incorrect; however, some essays are also readable and clear. **C.** Writers may not understand what they are writing about or whether they are responding to the online writing placement test’s prompt or instructions.

**Comma Splices: T.** Essays contain comma splices: two independent clauses joined by a comma.

**Copy/Parrot: C.** Writers copy or parrot back most of the placement test article’s main points.

**Cohesiveness/Connections: C.** Connective devices among parts of the essays, such as paragraphs, are weak.

**Counterargument: T.** Essays contain unclear and/or undeveloped counterarguments.

**Curricular Exemplars: C.** Writers address curricular exemplars or model essays of the writing program, such as arguing positions.

**Development/Length: T.** Essays are undeveloped, short, developed, or well-developed. **C.** Writers could have developed their essays more.
ESL (RQ 7): C. Students may be ESL writers.

Essay Structure/Organization: T. Essays contain clear or unclear structures. Organization and structure are basic, odd, random, regular, hierarchical, and/or nonexistent. C. Writers need to clearly organize their thoughts.

Focus/Jump Around: T. Essays contain no clear focus, and the focus jumps around.

Fragments: T. Essays contain fragments or incomplete sentences which distract the reader.

Ideas: T. Essays lack the organization of ideas. C. Writers have good ideas. They need to learn how to divide their ideas.

Introduction/Conclusion: T. Introductions and/or conclusions are undeveloped, generic, missing, and/or clear. Writers do not forecast clear essay structures.

Metadiscourse/Transitions: T. Metadiscourse and transitions are basic, weak, or missing.

Narrative (RQ 7): T. Essays favor narrative support over argumentative support. C. Writers may understand narration but not argumentation.

On Topic: T. Essays stay on topic.

Paragraphs: T. The essays’ paragraphs are not cohesive and/or lack proper formation and paragraphing breaks. Essays include one paragraph responses, incorporate source material to support the argument, employ odd structures, and/or lack development and focus.

Points: T. Essays need more points to support theses, or the points are unclear. C. Writers may not understand the points they present.

Prompt: C. Writers respond or do not respond to the online writing placement essay’s instructions or prompt.

Pronoun Shifts: T. Essays contain point of view shifts and pronoun errors.

Rhetorical Structures: T. Essays lack basic rhetorical structures.

Run Ons: T. Essays contain run on or fused sentences.

Sentence/Syntax Issues: T. Essays contain sentence-level problems and errors and weird, odd, and/or screwy sentence constructions. Sentence boundary, grammatical, and/or syntactical errors are evident, and sentence variety is lacking. Some sentence-level issues are okay. C. Writers may be able to identify, understand, and/or correct sentence level errors if the errors have not fossilized. Writers may benefit from sentence combining activities to vary sentence structure.
Severity/Pervasiveness: T. Essays contain severe sentence-level issues. Some sentences are not severe enough to warrant a 110 placement.

Spelling: T. Essays contain spelling and usage errors.

Stream-Of-Conscious: C. Writers typed every thought they had related to the placement essay topic.

Summary/Report: T. Essays read like reports or summaries rather than argumentative/persuasive essays.

Support: T. Essays included enough or inadequate support to support the main points.

Talked Up/Talked Into/Can Go/Could Go/Can Live With: C. Evaluators indicate a willingness and/or desire to be talked into English 110 or English 111 placements or to settle on particular placement decisions based upon uncertainty or other factors.

Thesis/Forecast: T. The essays’ main points do not support the theses. Essays include forecasts of the main points.

Thought Chunks: T. Thoughts are expressed in displaced, unconnected chunks. C. Writers need to clearly organize their thoughts.

Too Simple/Too Safe: T. Essays are too simple or safe.

Topic Sentences: T. Essays need topic sentences and/or clear topic sentences. C. Writers use topic sentences to respond to the article’s author.

Training (RQ 4): C. Evaluators refer to placement essays examined during Placement Program training sessions.

Verbs: T. Essays contain verb tense and/or usage errors.

Weird: T. Essays contain weird elements, such as sentences, spellings, and constructions.

Word Choice/Vocabulary: T. Word choice and vocabulary are sophisticated, underdeveloped, or incorrect. C. Writers seem to be playing with words.

Writer Based: C. Essays are writer based. The writers’ prose makes sense primarily to them but not to an audience.
Pair 3

110 Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples

The following “Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples” corresponds to the preceding “Placement Criteria Glossary.” The in vivo examples for each criterion were studied, criterion-by-criterion, and the preceding glossary containing textual and/or contextual definitions of each individual criterion was written. Numbers in parenthesis note the number of times each criterion was invoked overall and according to the following categories: “110S,” “Borderlines First Time Period,” “Disagreements First Time Period,” “Borderlines Second Time Period,” and “Disagreements Second Time Period.”

Apostrophes (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): There were like with the apostrophes for plurals

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): Missing apostrophes;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Argument (14)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): And it was narrative over argumentation. Like it’s kind of like you get this whole story with the dad and then we just get this conclusion, “sleep is more important than what people think” (RQ 7); I could see an argument in it;

Contextual (2): I just thought that his position and his argument was clever enough that I was kind of like, he’s got a little bit of thought in it and an argument; I put down largely based on the final paragraph ‘cause I thought it was a creative argument or stand;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (4): I wasn’t sure if she tied everything together in terms of the argument and its mode; I think I might have given him some credit for just incorporating the source into the argument like he does here in this paragraph, and; And it is an argument; I thought he was doing argumentative;
Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): Like he does have a structure and argument;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): The problem is that his argument, I think you’re right, is there, but it is buried. It’s kind of situated underneath each of Clark’s points; So there’s argumentation concerns; And it is like he does have an argument at times but now that I look at this again, like this is all just reporting here (RQ 7);
Contextual (2): I wasn’t sure about argument cohesion or the structure; “Is this implying an argument, or does this person not understand argumentation?”;

Article/Attribution/Quotation/Source Citations (12)
110S None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): he quoted wikipedia, which was almost done right; it does just kind of go online and quote wikipedia;
Contextual (1): he’s trying to counterargue the article, but he wasn’t successful in that;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): I think I could have given a little more credit just for at least acknowledging the prompts, “as Clark also wrote in her article in trying to” (RQ 7); I think I might have given him some credit for just incorporating the source into the argument like he does here in this paragraph, and;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): She does acknowledge the source; It seems like the sources kind of created the direction of the essay; it’s not done accurately…like quoting and attribution of quotes and the like;
Contextual (5): He knows the source; He could just have looked at the source and then just copied the main points; He’s just trying to stick to the source; Maybe he has the essay [source] right in front of him; he went through the essay and he responded to what Clark said, and that’s what the topic sentences are;

Audience/Reader-Based (3)

110S None

Borderlines First Time Period
None
Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): There’s no audience there;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): it did have a sense of other people are out there (audience); And the reader has the job to;

Benefit/Need (14)

110S
Contextual (3): she could benefit from extra one-on-one; He needs a lot of extra attention; Well, it couldn’t hurt if we put an S because it will give him more [attention]; She could benefit from closer one-on-one;

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (3): Maybe the student can benefit in a 110; Maybe the student can benefit from more grammar instruction then; Stronger 110 would be okay. She could benefit from that;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): 110. Because I know that the student can benefit from a 110 class. More contact hours with the teacher;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (3): He can benefit more with 110 instruction; The student can benefit from more instruction; Definitely needs some more help;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (4): You think he can or she can benefit from a 110?; It’s for this person’s benefit. I’ll put a 110; I would feel more comfortable with this student placed with a more one-on-one; She might need extra help, so I could go with that. Stronger 110;

Choppiness of Writing (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): I could go down to 110 because she does tend to be choppy in certain places;

Disagreements First Time Period
None
Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): I mean this is very choppy sentence;

Clarity/Readability (25)

110S
Textual (2): there were a lot of sentence level problems, I thought. I mean, just reading this “Their body is not tamed to do so.” “Even though sleep is been healthy for the human body, it isn’t so much as necessary.” What does that even mean?; I don’t even know what she’s saying here;

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (12): I gave a 110 just because she jumps around a bit and has no clear focus; It does not have clear organization; need to clearly organize her thought; It does need clear essay structure, too; It needs clear essay structure as well, I guess; I don’t understand why these paragraph breaks are there; the prose is readable; It’s readable prose; It was readable; The prose is readable; Walking the reader; I could read it;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (4): The elements for clear essay; even the introduction does not signal clear essay structure; it was readable; I can give this a strong 110+ because it is readable;

Contextual (1): This one was tough. I was like, “What is this person doing?”;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (2): And the focus is not so clear, and I’m not so sure if she knows what she’s writing about; I don’t know if it directly responded to the prompt either;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (4): A lot of unclear antecedents, like you don’t know….Pronouns; There’s a clear opening; I am not sure of my understanding what the topic, what her focus really is; I got kind of confused reading this one;

Comma Splices (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): This is a comma splice;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): You’ve got comma splices and run ons there;
Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Copy/Parrot (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): that just might demonstrate that we’re just kind of parroting back;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (1): He could just have looked at the source and then just copied the main points;

Cohesiveness/Connections (4)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): That was my big thing was just the cohesion of it; The paragraphs seemed to be together, but I didn’t see the connections between paragraphs really well;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): It didn’t seem to me that things were all that well connected;

Counterargument (2)

110S
None
Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): Both his counterargument and conclusion is in one small paragraph; I know that he’s trying to counterargue the article, but he wasn’t successful in that;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Curricular Exemplars (1)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): I just thought that his position and his argument was clever enough (RQ 8);

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Development/Length (34)

110S

Textual (3): It’s really underdeveloped; it’s a real short paragraph; there’s five [sentences] here;

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (9): It’s undeveloped; it’s really underdeveloped and abrupt ending; it’s kind of short and not very well developed; It needs more development; Too underdeveloped; And the introduction and conclusion could be more developed to situate, you know, and he didn’t do that; I guess my big thing was the development; It does have some development to it; more development is needed;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (6): I gave her more credit because of the development then maybe I should of; I thought it was fairly well developed; the development was such a key issue for me; Cause really development is an issue, too; It just wasn’t enough for me; And there’s a lot there;
Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (9): And even like the development was like. I could do a 110+; Still is not as strong as far as development; A little short. A little underdeveloped; I said that it’s a little bit underdeveloped; A lot of underdeveloped paragraphs; That was my big kind of concern was the focus and the development; It’s so underdeveloped; This is some sophisticated vocabulary although it’s really underdeveloped; It’s just development was lacking;

Contextual (2): he could have developed it; He could have explained more;

Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (5): I think I gave a little too much credit the development of this a bit; I’ve got 111 although I said it could be more developed; It was a brief response; this one’s kind of short; It’s too long;

ESL (1)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period

Contextual (1): I even thought that this person was ESL at first (RQ 7);

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Essay Structure/Organization (37)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (9): It does have the proper elements on an essay though; Mine is the essay structure; lacks essay structure; It does need clear essay structure, too; It needs clear essay structure as well, I guess; I gave her credit because she does have a sense of structure; It does have a structure to it; It does have a structure; It does not have clear organization;

Contextual (1): need to clearly organize her thoughts;

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (8): The elements for clear essay; even the introduction does not signal clear essay structure; I just didn’t see an essay here; it should have been expressed in a regular essay; He
could have expressed this in a regular essay structure; It’s like the longest essay; It’s got an odd structure, too; Lots of random thoughts could be better organized;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (7):** It does lack the basic elements on an essay; I saw kind of a structure to this; I think I went over just because it did seem like it had some kind of structure to it; Like he does have a structure and argument; He mentioned there are two questions. Does that indicate some sort of an organization?; He lacks organization, but he did raise good support; I thought there was a little bit of an organization;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (12):** it [essay] was kind of basic; there is not much evidence of a basic essay structure there; lack of basic essay structure; It does have a sense of structure; it does have a structure; I wasn’t sure about argument cohesion or the structure; there is not much evidence of a basic essay structure there; I saw structure to it though, um, with an introduction and conclusion; But there’s no sense of structure; I guess like it gave it a 111- because of the structure and everything; It does lack organization of ideas; Not because we're looking at this but the ideas themselves could be more organized really; there was a sense of chronological order;

**Focus/Jump Around (14)**

**110S**
None

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (5):** Because I’m not sure what the focus is; she jumps around a bit and has no clear focus; Her main focus is why they can’t get enough sleep. And she raises three points to support that; This one that just goes on and on and on and on; He does tend to jump around a bit;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (1):** She jumps around a bit, too;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (5):** That was my big kind of concern was the focus and the development; And the focus is not so clear; There’s no focus; She does jump around a lot; she tends to jump around;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (3):** It’s not so tightly, so the focus; I am not sure of my understanding what the topic, what her focus really is; it seems to be jumpy;

**Fragments (7)**

**110S**
None
Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): There’s another fragment there; So this is a fragment;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): I saw fragments and run ons; I’ve got a 110 for her because some of the fragments are really distracting; So I think because of the fragments and some of the basic rhetorical structures there that’s missing, to put this kid in a 110;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): I’ve got a 110 for her because of the fragments in the beginning paragraphs; what gave me a 110 rating is because of the fragments;

Ideas (5)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): And she has good ideas;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): It does lack organization of ideas; Not because we’re looking at this but the ideas themselves could be more organized really; This idea not to mention parents don’t know how to budget was something that they had just said right here;
Contextual (1): I do understand what you said about him learning how to divide his ideas;

Introduction/Conclusion (17)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): Both his counterargument and conclusion is in one small paragraph; Like it’s kind of like you get this whole story with the dad and then we just get this conclusion, “sleep is more important than what people think”; The introduction was just like, “Whoa!”; abrupt ending;
I gave her credit because she does have a sense of structure, and we’ve got basic transitions, like
Contextual (2): labeling, telling us “overall,” “here is the conclusion”; the introduction and conclusion could be more developed to situate, you know, and he didn’t do that;
**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (2):** even the introduction does not signal clear essay structure; it did merit a 111 because the first sentence functions like an introduction and the rest of the sentences even if it could have been;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (3):** There was a sense of a conclusion; we have a generic comment for an introduction and then a therefore as a concluding statement; I mean he does like say that at the end, he does come back and say that is

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (6):** I saw structure to it though, um, with an introduction and conclusion; And there is no proper conclusion even; She is missing a conclusion, too; Cause I was rereading the introduction, and I could find…Okay; So there are transitions in the sense that not only does he introduce the topic sentence, but he also locates where it is; There’s a clear opening;

**Metadiscourse/Transitions (8)**

110S
None

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (5):** Sentence-level errors were a concern and metadiscourse; Maybe more metadiscourse at the beginning of the paragraph could have strengthened the essay; more transitions; it lacks transitions; we’ve got basic transitions;

**Disagreements First Time Period**
None

**Borderlines Second Time Period**
None

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (3):** I might have missed some things here although he could use more transitions; And then there’s no transitional elements between that shift; So there are transitions in the sense that not only does he introduce the topic sentence, but he also locates where it is;

**Narrative (4)**

110S
None

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (1):** And it was narrative over argumentation. Like it’s kind of like you get this whole story with the dad and then we just get this conclusion, “sleep is more important than what people think” (RQ 7);
Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): It’s a narrative (RQ 7); Contextual (2): I kind of questioned myself because the whole thing is a narrative, and I asked myself, “Is this implying an argument, or does this person not understand argumentation?” (RQ 7); Because he does know how to narrate, you know (RQ 7);

On Topic (1)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): she stays on topic (RQ 7);

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Paragraphs (26)

110S
Textual (1): even as a paragraph

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (9): Both his counterargument and conclusion is in one small paragraph; the paragraph formation is an issue; Paragraph formation for me; I was 110 until I hit the last paragraph, and after he quoted wikipedia, which was almost done right; I put down largely based on the final paragraph ‘cause I thought it was a creative argument or stand, but I might be giving too much credit to that paragraph especially since it does just kind of go online and quote wikipedia; she has this forecast where she says in the next few paragraphs; more metadiscourse at the beginning of the paragraph could have strengthened the essay; The paragraphs seemed to be together, but I didn’t see the connections between paragraphs really well; it’s not like I don’t understand why these paragraph breaks are there;
**Disagreements First Time Period**

Textual (8): now that I look at it again, even that’s [acknowledging the prompt] done a couple of times within the one paragraph; this was like that one paragraph response; cause there was one example during the training session where there was one paragraph, and it did merit a 111 because the first sentence functions like an introduction and the rest of the sentences even if it could have been (RQ 4); it’s like half of the paragraph before you even get into the internet; some of the sentence level issues, like the last paragraph, are severe that; I think I might have given him some credit for just incorporating the source into the argument like he does here in this paragraph; when I look at this paragraph some say; The first one [sentence] in that paragraph;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

Textual (4): This one was really strange structurally with a short paragraph and a second long one; there’s no real paragraphing here; A lot of underdeveloped paragraphs; Let me read that first paragraph again. “Altercations.” I’m not sure if that’s the right word;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

Textual (4): the paragraphs individually kind of make sense; I think even within the paragraphs, it seemed like; I just thought the paragraphs seemed to kind of drift; And the paragraph itself. We have given a 111 for one paragraphs, but this one’s kind of short, and it seems to be jumpy;

**Points (8)**

110S
None

**Borderlines First Time Period**

Textual (2): let’s take a look at this point; she raises three points to support that;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

Textual (1): To that point;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

Textual (1): More points could have been raised to support the thesis;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

Textual (2): Although he’s got points. Each of these talk about specific points; The problem is that his argument, I think you’re right, is there, but it is buried. It’s kind of situated underneath each of Clark’s points;

Contextual (2): I’m not even sure if he knows the main points that he’s trying to raise there; He could just have looked at the source and then just copied the main points;

**Prompt (6)**

110S
None
Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): I can live with that because it does answer the [prompt] question (RQ 7);

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (4): I think I could have given a little more credit just for at least acknowledging the prompts, “as Clark also wrote in her article in trying to” (RQ 7); the prompt is “Are the effects of a particular technology beneficial or harmful overall?” And that’s what that person does answer although it takes him a while to get there (RQ 7); She’s very close to the prompt (RQ 7); now that I look at it again, even that’s [acknowledging the prompt] done a couple of times within the one paragraph (RQ 7);

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): I don’t know if it directly responded to the prompt either (RQ 7);

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Pronoun Shifts (6)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (6): One the pronouns just seem so out of wack here. Like who’s this “their”? And who’s “they” here? “They” as in video games; A lot of unclear antecedents, like you don’t know….Pronouns; “They” as in the children or “they” as the parents (pronouns)?; We go from many students to I back to students; There seems to be a shift there; there’s a shift where she kind of comes in and says something about herself, and then she just. And then there’s no transitional elements between that shift;

Rhetorical Structures (2)

110S
None
Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): there are some rhetorical structure involved;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): some of the basic rhetorical structures there that’s missing;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Run Ons (5)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): I was bothered by some of the run on sentences;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): I saw fragments and run ons; You’ve got comma splices and run ons there;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): Run on sentences; Run ons really distract me;

Sentence/Syntax Issues (76)

110S
Textual (4): I know that there are a lot of sentence structure; it wasn’t just the sentence structure thing; there were a lot of sentence level problems, I thought. I mean, just reading this “Their body is not tamed to do so.” “Even though sleep is been healthy for the human body, it isn’t so much as necessary.” What does that even mean?; there’s five [sentences] here;

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (23): there were some sentence-level concerns, too; there some sentence-level; And there’s were some sentence-level issues, too; There are some obvious sentence-level issues there; Sentence-level errors are a problem again; Sentence-level errors were a concern and metadiscourse; The mere fact that you caught the sentence-level errors; Because there are some sentence-level errors; I was bothered by some of the run on sentences; Some of the sentence-level things were real; Sentences like [Reads quickly from essay], there are a lot of those kinds of sentences I remember in this; And this sentence. And I remember this sentence. This crazy one; Sentence level concerns, I think did it in finally; Sentence-level is okay; the sentence-level is
okay; that actually should be added to the previous sentence; Sentence-level issues are evident; the sentences are just so weird in this one; It might just be the sentences themselves; There were a number of sentences that were just kind of like strangely connected or kind of just like additive; the sentences are a little bit problematic; I looked at some of these sentences and thought well; I said this weird construction;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

*Textual (14):* the sentence-level things that you mentioned were things that I noticed, too, and they are pretty frequent; the first sentence functions like an introduction and the rest of the sentences even if it could have been; I’ve got a 111- because some of the sentence level issues, like the last paragraph, are severe that; And it wasn’t just the sentence-level errors for me; so many broken sentences; This [sentence] distracted me; frequent sentence level things; the same [sentence] mistake it seemed like again and again and again; Sentence boundary issues like are really a problem; I think some of the errors are pretty significant, sentence-level I mean; the sentences don’t seem that bad too me; this sentence just goes on and on and on and on; his sentence with the semicolon, I mean this is a pretty elaborate sentence that’s done correctly; The first one [sentence] in that paragraph. Yeah. Okay. That’s fine;

*Contextual (2):* I wondered if that [sentence] mistake were pointed out, this person would have that hard of a time figuring it out and identifying it; It [sentence mistake] might have fossilized;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

*Textual (12):* There were a lot of sentence concerns; the sentences were so kind of screwy; There were a lot of sentence-level concerns; With the sentences being what they are in relation to what’s actually here, I felt like it’s probably a 110; I think the thing that did it for me was just the sentences themselves; The reason why I did that was because of some sentence-level issues; the sentences are not as severe as a 110; there are sentences; even like within these sentences, it’s--he has the “it is”--even individually these sentences have sentence level things; I have a 110 for *** because of the syntax faults; I knew there were some syntax issues; The only reason is because of the syntax faults;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

*Textual (20):* I’ve got a 110 for some reason because of the sentence-level issues; Like there were some sentence concerns; The sentence constructions were really strange, too; My reasons for this were sentence boundary issues that are pretty much evident; I had problems with spelling and the sentence construction; I saw some sentence issues; I read this sentence like; Like this sentence here: “Stressing that violence is bad gives them smarts, and also make sure they don’t get carried away with too many”; I mean this is very choppy sentence; You for the sentence and me for the lack of; Frequent sentence concerns, I thought, warranted 110; I guess I saw a lot of weird sentences; Like I remember this sentence; I guess like sentences like that just kind of drove me a little; This [sentence] one for instance; sentence-level kinds of things; Run on sentences; This sentence is really long in the third paragraph; there are sentence level concerns; there wasn’t any sentence variety;

*Contextual (1):* I just thought she could use more work on doing a variety of sentences and combining sentences and maybe coordinating sentences;
Severity/Pervasiveness (3)

110S
Textual (3): This one was pretty severe; Because it’s real severe sentence structure; I thought this was actually kind of severe. I mean I could do a straight 110. I just thought, “Wow”;

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): some of the sentence level issues, like the last paragraph, are severe that; I just don’t see enough there to warrant a 111;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): the sentences are not as severe as a 110;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Spelling (6)

110S
Textual (1): the spelling

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): There were times I was kind of like either spelling was off or there were a lot of those kinds of things, “stressful”;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): There were still some weird spelling kinds of things; “meets” is spelled wrong;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): I had problems with spelling and the sentence construction; Yeah, the spelling that you said must be the “collage”;

Stream-Of-Conscious (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): Cause it almost seemed stream of conscious to me where it was just kind of like every thought that had to do with this topic had to be typed in;
Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (1): it was stream-of-conscious;

Summary/Report (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): This one was just more like a summary in a way, too (RQ 7); like this is all just reporting here. I don’t think he [writer] comes in at all in this paragraph. It’s just Clark, Clark, Clark, Clark (voice) (RQ 7);

Support (3)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): he did raise good support; More points could have been raised to support the thesis;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): the supporting
Talked Up/Talked Into/Can Go/Could Go/Can Live With (37)

110S

Contextual (3): I could go with an 110S; I mean I could do a straight 110; I can go with a 110;

Borderlines First Time Period

Contextual (17): I can be talked up; I could probably be talked up; I could be talked into that; I can go for 110; I can go up; I can go for a 110+ because I was also borderline; I could go with 110+; I could go with that; I could go down to a 110; I could go with that; I could go for a 110; I could go to 111-; I could go down to 110; I could go with a 111-; I can live with that; I could live with that; I could live with that; I could read it;

Disagreements First Time Period

Contextual (4): I could go with a 110+; I could go down to 110; I could live with that; I could live with that;

Borderlines Second Time Period

Contextual (5): I can go for a higher 110 now that I’m rereading it; I could go with a 110+; I could go 110+; I could probably be talked down to 110; I could probably be talked down;

Disagreements Second Time Period

Contextual (8): I can go with a 110+; I can go with a 110+ for this; I can go with you; I can go with a plus; I could go with your 110; I could go with that; I could move down to 110; I could even be talked down to 110;

Thesis/Forecast (3)

110S

None

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (1): she has this forecast where she says in the next few paragraphs, I’m going to do this;

Disagreements First Time Period

None

Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (2): More points could have been raised to support the thesis; That’s really off thesis;

Disagreements Second Time Period

None

Thought Chunks (6)

110S

None
Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): Thoughts expressed in chunks;
Contextual (1): Thought chunks, need to clearly organize her thoughts;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): If I remember this one correctly, you’re right about that chunking thing, too; there’s this chunk of the iceberg and going back in time to 1925, and so it’s like half of the paragraph before you even get into the internet;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): Thought chunks; Displaced thought chunks;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Too Simple/Too Safe (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): Too simple; It’s too safe;

Topic Sentences (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None
Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): He needs topic sentences; I thought he had topic sentences because what he’s doing is he’s going through the essay; So there are transitions in the sense that not only does he introduce the topic sentence, but he also locates where it is;
Contextual (1): he went through the essay and he responded to what Clark said, and that’s what the topic sentences are;

Training (1)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): cause there was one example during the training session where there was one paragraph (RQ 4);

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Verbs (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): There were like verb tense changes. We have an “is there” and a “was”;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): we have verbs that are incorrect;

Weird (11)

110S
None
Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): This was a weird one; I said this weird construction; That one was a weird one; the sentences are just so weird in this one;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (4): There were still some weird spelling kinds of things; That was a weird one;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): And there were a lot of weird things for me, too; Well, this is kind of weird, too; I guess I saw a lot of weird sentences; It’s weird;

Word Choice/Vocabulary (6)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): And some word choice, too;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): he does have this “you expensive habits” and, you know, “effect” instead of “affect,” (word choice); Even though he does attempt “altercations,” which I don’t think is right. But “extravagant” is a pretty good, reasonably good…but I still feel like 110+ (word choice); This is some sophisticated vocabulary although it’s really underdeveloped;
Contextual (2): “Altercations.” I’m not sure if that’s the right word; It seems that he is playing with words;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Writer Based (5)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): I think it was real writer-based;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): It’s kind of writer-based;
Borderlines Second Time Period

*Contextual (3):* It was definitely writer-based, too; it is kind of writer based; More writer-based;

Disagreements Second Time Period

None
Pair 3: 110 Frequency Codebooks

Each codebook contains the frequency that each individual criterion was invoked in placement discussions overall, in borderline discussions, and in discussions during the first half (June 12-June 22) and second half (June 26-July 19) of the Placement Program. Frequencies are meant to be general approximations; all frequencies are rounded up to the nearest half-point; therefore, the frequencies in any given codebook do not total 100%.

Overall

Sentence/Syntax Issues: 18%
Essay Structure/Organization: 9%
Talked Up/Talked Into/Can Go/Could Go/Can Live With: 9%
Development/Length: 8%
Paragraphs: 6%
Clarity/Readability: 6%
Introduction/Conclusion: 4%
Argument: 3%
Benefit/Need: 3%
Article/Attribution/Quotation/Source Citations: 3%
Focus/Jump Around: 3%
Weird: 2.5%
Fragments: 2%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 2%
Points: 2%
Word Choice/Vocabulary: 1.5%
Thought Chunks: 1.5%
Writer Based: 1%
Ideas: 1%
Prompt (RQ 7): 1%
Pronoun Shifts: 1%
Audience/Reader-Based: 1%
Support: 1%
Run Ons: 1%
Cohesiveness/Connections: 1%
Thesis/Forecast: 1%
Severity/Pervasiveness: 1%
Spelling: 1%
Narrative (RQ 7): 1%
Choppiness of Writing: 0.5%
Comma Splices: 0.5%
Copy/Parrot: 0.5%
Counterargument: 0.5%
Apostrophes: 0.5%
Curricular Exemplars: 0.5%
Rhetorical Structures: 0.5%
Verbs: 0.5%
Stream-Of-Conscious: 0.5%
Summary/Report (RQ 7): 0.5%
Too Simple/Too Safe: 0.5%
Topic Sentences: 0.5%
ESL (RQ 7): < 0.5%
On Topic (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Training (RQ 4): < 0.5%
Borderlines

Sentence/Syntax Issues: 16%
Talked Up/Talked Into/Can Go/Could Go/Can Live With: 10%
Development/Length: 9%
Essay Structure/Organization: 8%
Clarity/Readability: 7%
Paragraphs: 6%
Focus/Jump Around: 5%
Introduction/Conclusion: 4%
Word Choice/Vocabulary: 3%
Benefit/Need: 3%
Argument: 2%
Thought Chunks: 2%
Weird: 2%
Writer Based: 2%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 2%
Thesis/Forecast: 1.5%
Apostrophes: 1%
Article/Attribution/Quotation/Source Citations: 1%
Fragments: 1%
Points: 1%
Prompt (RQ 7): 1%
Cohesiveness/Connections: 1%
Counterargument: 1%
Choppiness of Writing: 0.5%
Comma Splices: 0.5%
Curricular Exemplars: 0.5%
Rhetorical Structures: 0.5%
Support: 0.5%
Severity/Pervasiveness: 0.5%
Spelling: 0.5%
Stream-Of-Conscious: 0.5%
Narrative (RQ 7): 0.5%
Run Ons: 0.5%
ESL (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Copy/Parrot: < 0.5%
Pronoun Shifts: < 0.5%
Audience/Reader-Based: < 0.5%
Summary/Report (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Too Simple/Too Safe: < 0.5%
Topic Sentences: < 0.5%
Training (RQ 4): < 0.5%
Verbs: < 0.5%
Ideas: < 0.5%
On Topic (RQ 7): < 0.5%
First Half

Sentence/Syntax Issues: 18%
Talked Up/Talked Into/Can Go/Could Go/Can Live With: 9%
Essay Structure/Organization: 8%
Clarity/Readability: 8%
Paragraphs: 8%
Development/Length: 7%
Argument: 4%
Introduction/Conclusion: 4%
Weird: 4%
Focus/Jump Around: 3%
Article/Attribution/Quotation/Source Citations: 2%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 2%
Benefit/Need: 2%
Fragments: 2%
Prompt (RQ 7): 2%
Thought Chunks: 2%
Cohesiveness/Connections: 1%
Counterargument: 1%
Writer Based: 1%
Rhetorical Structures: 1%
Run Ons: 1%
Severity/Pervasiveness: 1%
Spelling: 1%
Apostrophes: 0.5%
Audience/Reader-Based: 0.5%
Choppiness of Writing: 0.5%
Comma Splices: 0.5%
Copy/Parrot: 0.5%
Curricular Exemplars: 0.5%
ESL (RQ 7): 0.5%
Ideas: 0.5%
Narrative (RQ 7): 0.5%
On Topic (RQ 7): 0.5%
Training (RQ 4): 0.5%
Verbs: 0.5%
Thesis/Forecast: 0.5%
Word Choice/Vocabulary: 0.5%
Points: 0.5%
Stream-Of-Conscious: 0.5%
Pronoun Shifts: < 0.5%
Summary/Report (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Support: < 0.5%
Too Simple/Too Safe: < 0.5%
Topic Sentences: < 0.5%
Second Half

Sentence/Syntax Issues: 16%
Essay Structure/Organization: 9%
Development/Length: 8%
Talked Up/Talked Into/Can Go/Could Go/Can Live With: 6%
Article/Attribution/Quotation/Source Citations: 4%
Paragraphs: 4%
Focus/Jump Around: 4%
Introduction/Conclusion: 4%
Clarity/Readability: 3%
Argument: 3%
Benefit/Need: 3%
Pronoun Shifts: 3%
Ideas: 2%
Word Choice/Vocabulary: 2%
Points: 2%
Weird: 1.5%
Writer Based: 1.5%
Support: 1.5%
Audience/Reader-Based: 1%
Fragments: 1%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 1%
Narrative (RQ 7): 1%
Thesis/Forecast: 1%
Thought Chunks: 1%
Too Simple/Too Safe: 1%
Topic Sentences: 1%
Summary/Report (RQ 7): 1%
Spelling: 1%
Run Ons: 1%
Choppiness of Writing: 0.5%
Apostrophes: 0.5%
Cohesiveness/Connections: 0.5%
Verbs: 0.5%
Severity/Pervasiveness: 0.5%
Stream-Of-Conscious: 0.5%
Copy/Parrot: 0.5%
Prompt (RQ 7): 0.5%
Comma Splices: < 0.5%
Counterargument: < 0.5%
Curricular Exemplars: < 0.5%
ESL (RQ 7): < 0.5%
On Topic (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Rhetorical Structures: < 0.5%
Training (RQ 4): < 0.5%
110S

Benefit/Need: 15%
Clarity/Readability: 10%
Development/Length: 15%
Paragraphs: 5%
Sentence/Syntax Issues: 20%
Severity/Pervasiveness: 15%
Spelling: 5%
Talked Up/Talked Into/Can Go/Could Go/Can Live With: 15%
Pair 3
111 Placement Criteria Glossary

The abbreviation “T” refers to the textual definition of each criterion, and the abbreviation “C” refers to the contextual definition of each criterion. The abbreviation “RQ” refers to particular supporting research questions in the study.

Apostrophes: T. Apostrophes are used correctly or incorrectly; apostrophes are missing.

Argument: T. Essays contain unclear, clear, readable, extended, and/or sophisticated arguments. Some essays favor informative or speculative approaches over argumentative strategies.
C. Writers attempt to convince an audience, and they have an understanding of argument.

Article/Author/Readings/Source Citations: T. Essays acknowledge readings and set up the online writing placement test’s article and the author’s main points; essays effectively acknowledge, introduces, and/or acknowledges source material; essays include Works Cited pages; and essays rely too heavily on source material.
C. Writers attempt to do a close reading of the placement test’s article and synthesize material in the article with personal experience (RQ 8); Writers may or may not struggle with source integration in English 112. Writers attempt to respond to and/or acknowledge the article’s author and demonstrate an ability to cite material. Writers effectively introduce source material.

Audience: T. Essays lack audience awareness.
C. Writers may need instruction in audience. Writers demonstrate an awareness of audience.

Awkwardness: T. Essays contain awkward sentences, paragraph breaks, and sentence constructions.

Benefit/Need: C. Writers may benefit from instruction in English 111, such as proofreading work.

Body Paragraphs: T. Body paragraphs are unclear or readable; they do not include transitional elements.
C. Writers use topic sentences to introduce material in body paragraphs.

Bothered: C. Evaluators were bothered by various essay elements, such as repetition, sentence-level errors, introductions and conclusions, etcetera.

Can Live With/Could Live With/Can Go/Could Go/Talked Down/Talked Into/Talked Up: C. Evaluators indicate a willingness and/or desire to be talked into English 110, English 111, or English 112 placements. The evaluator also indicates a willingness to agree with his/her partner.

Capitalization: T. Essays contain capitalization errors.

Choppiness of Writing: T. Essays contain short and choppy passages.
Clarity/Readability: T. Essays contain unclear, readable, and clear arguments; essays are clearly focused or unfocused and lack clear focus, support, references, and main points; essays have clear or confusing structures and/or content; essays contain weird of strange constructions. C. Writers attempt to clearly respond to the online writing placement test’s prompt or instructions.

Clauses/Phrases: T. Essays contain embedded clauses, “therefore” clauses, noun and verb phrases, clustered phrases, embedded sentences, and introductory phrases. C. Writers demonstrate proficiency embedding clauses though they embed too many phrases at times.

Coherent/Tied Together: T. Essay elements are coherent and well-tied together, and essays need further coherence and logical connections. C. Writers could have tied up the main points.

Commas: T. Comma usage was correct, misused, misplaced, inconsistent, or missing. Commas are used correctly in various clause and phrase constructions. C. Writers know how to use commas with introductory clauses.

Comma Splices: T. Essays contain comma splices: two independent clauses joined by a comma.

Comparing Essays: C. Evaluators compare essays to previously scored essays in making placement decisions.

Convince Myself: C. Evaluators try to convince themselves to make particular placements through discussions.

Counterargument/Concession/Drawback: T. Essays include counterarguments, concessions, and/or drawbacks. C. Writers have the ability to write essays with counterarguments.

Creativity: T. Essays contain creative elements, such as ideas, introductions, and conclusions. C. Writers indicate that they are creative.

Curricular Exemplars: C. Writers address curricular exemplars or model essays of the writing program, such as arguing positions and speculating about causes.

Development/Length: T. Essays are developed, well-developed, strongly developed, short, undeveloped, developed in a five-paragraph structure, and/or developed nicely; essays contain excellent and adequate development. C. Writers know how to develop their ideas. Writers may need more instruction in development to survive English 111.

Don’t Know Why: C. Evaluators indicate they do not know why they made particular individual placements decisions.

Err on the Side of Caution: C. Evaluators are cautious in making placement decisions.
Essay Structure/Organization/Basic Essay/Five Paragraph Structure: T. Essays contain a five paragraph, clear, formulaic, and/or basic organization and structure. Essays exhibit strong but not sophisticated structures. C. Writers know how to organize but need more instruction in organization or writers need to learn how to basic essay structure.

Focus/Jump Around: T. Essays are focused or unfocused. Some essays jump around or drift in focus.

Formulaic: T. Essays are formulaic.

Fragments: T. Essays contain fragments or incomplete sentences.

Hierarchy: C. Essays include a hierarchy of ideas, factors, or reasons, and writers attempt to foreground the most important ideas, factors, or reasons.

Ideas: T. Essays contain good, random, creative, interesting, repetitive, and/or developed ideas. Ideas lack organization. C. Writers are clear in support their main ideas. Writers understand or do not understand how to develop their ideas.

Interesting: T. Essays include interesting images, points, thoughts, ideas, and/or introductions.

Introduction/Conclusion: T. Introductions and/or conclusions are weak, underdeveloped, missing, impressive, creative, vague, interesting, and/or choppy; they lack synthesis, contain sentence level concerns, lack transitions, contain spelling errors, include generalizations, incorporate sources, demonstrate audience awareness, and/or forecast the main points, etcetera. C. Writers attempt to transition into the conclusion.

Language Control/Command: T. Essays exhibit a good command of language.

Like/Liked: C. Evaluators like various aspects of essays, such as source usage, counterarguments, and hierarchies of points.

Lists (RQ 7): T. Essays contain lists.

Narrative (RQ 7): C. Writers demonstrate good narrative skills.

On Topic (RQ 7): T. Essays’ arguments are on topic though sometimes off thesis.

Paragraphs: T. The essays’ paragraphs are readable, focused, unconnected, unfocused, developed, choppy, off thesis, short, chunked, and/or organized into five paragraph structures; essays lack paragraph breaks, included counterarguments, support the main points, lack focus, and/or demonstrate audience awareness. C. Writers understand paragraph formation, and writers break up paragraphs too frequently.

Parenthesis: C. Writers know how to use parenthesis.
Personal Experience (RQ 7): C. Writers rely upon personal experience to support essays.

Point of View/Pronoun Shifts: T. Essays contain point of view shifts and pronoun errors. C. Writers seem to lack audience awareness.

Points: T. The essays’ points are underdeveloped, easy to follow, supported with examples, used to support main points, logical, original, and/or organized in five paragraph essay structures. Transitional devices are lacking among points.

Prompt (RQ 7): C. Essays respond to the online writing placement test’s instructions though not perfectly.

Questions: T. Essays ask questions and/or rhetorical questions.

Repetition: T. Essays contain repetitive elements, such as main points and introductions.


Run Ons: T. Essays contain run ons or fused sentences. C. Writers can address run on errors in conferences with English 111 instructors.

Screwy: T. Essay elements, such as sentences and paragraphs, are screwy.

Semicolons: T. Semicolons are used correctly, incorrectly, and/or awkwardly.

Sentence/Syntax Issues: T. Essays contain screwy, odd, clunky, unclear, awkward, not well-constructed, off, sophisticated, choppy, fragmented, long, severe, wordy, incorrectly punctuated, and/or simplistic sentence constructions. Essays contained syntax and sentence boundary errors. Essays contain embedded clauses, “therefore” clauses, noun and verb phrases, clustered phrases, embedded sentences, and/or introductory phrases. C. Writers attempt elaborate sentence constructions unsuccessfully.

Severity/Pervasiveness: T. Essays contain numerous severe sentence-level concerns and errors but not enough to warrant 110 placements.

Sophistication: T. Essays lack sophistication and/or are not as sophisticated enough for a 112 placement.

Spelling: T. Essays contain spelling and usage errors, but errors are not dire or weird.

Support/Examples: T. Essays lack support, support thesis, contain supporting details from the article, support thesis with main points, and/or utilize original and unoriginal examples. Some examples lack transitions. C. Writers support theses with made up examples.

Survival/Struggle of Writer: C. Writers may survive and/or struggle in English 111 or English 112 and may need instruction in rhetoric, development, and/or organization.
Thesis/Forecast: T. Essays lack solid theses, need stronger theses, provide adequate or inadequate main points to support theses, contain theses in introductions, fail to support the theses, and/or provide inaccurate forecasting thesis statements. C. Writers attempt to develop theses.

Tone: T. Essays contain nice and/or good tone.

Too Harsh/Too Strict/Too Lax/Too Much Credit: C. Evaluators indicate that they are too harsh, too strict, too lax, or give too much credit with essay in making placement decisions.

Topic Sentences: T. Essays contain topic sentences.

Training/Norming Sessions: T. Evaluators refer to placement essay evaluated during a Placement Program training session.

Transitions/Movement: T. Essays contain basic, simplistic, and/or unclear transitions or lack transitional devices. Essays lack movement between paragraphs. C. Writers attempt to transition into concluding paragraphs.

Voice: C. Writers have a nice, strong voice with an appropriate tone and attitude.

Weird/Quirky/Strange/Odd: T. Entire essays or components of essays--such as sentences, essay format, and words--are weird, quirky, strange, and/or odd.

Word Choice/Word Usage/Vocabulary: T. Vocabulary is impressive, decent, good, correct, fairly or pretty good, and nice. Essays contain word choice and usage errors and repetitive word use.

Writer Based: C. Essays are writer based; some writer based passages are comprehensible. The writers’ prose makes sense primarily to them but not to an audience.

Writing Ability/Competence of Student: C. Writers demonstrate adequate writing competence, an ability to organize essays, an understanding of sentence constructions, and/or an ability to acknowledge sources. Writers may struggle in English 112 but would not have difficult writing an essay or counterargument.
Pair 3
111 Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples

The following “Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples” corresponds to the preceding “Placement Criteria Glossary.” The in vivo examples for each criterion were studied, criterion-by-criterion, and the preceding glossary containing textual and/or contextual definitions of each individual criterion was written. Numbers in parenthesis note the number of times each criterion was invoked overall and according to the following categories: “Borderlines First Time Period,” “Disagreements First Time Period,” “Borderlines Second Time Period,” and “Disagreements Second Time Period.”

Apostrophes (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): The apostrophes for plural which should not;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): It seems to me that he did use the apostrophe correctly; There were these semicolons where apostrophes should be;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): “Ones” without the apostrophe; With the apostrophe; With the apostrophe;

Argument (31)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (7): I wasn’t really quite sure what he was arguing. Yeah. It was readable, but I was kind of like, “what are you saying now”; I thought maybe when I first read through it might be that you had noted on yours, too, just that idea that “what are you arguing here?” was so strong to me that I thought well maybe; He makes an argument here; It does try to argue things without too many sentences; And there’s an argument in here although the structure itself was really strange; The argument is pretty clear; this did have an argument and a structure;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (9): I got the sense that he was arguing something; it is an extended argument that stays on topic; I mean you do get a sense of argument and a response; I’m probably giving too much credit for argumentation; this demonstrated an awareness of argumentation; It’s got an argument; I got some sense of argumentation in there; I could see the argument; the argument is present; Contextual (1): she was trying to convince the reader;
**Borderlines Second Time Period**  
**Textual (6):** It has an argument; I can see an argument; And I guess I gave him credit for having an argument; then he kind of shifts back over to this argument without any kind of marker of doing that; I thought it’s certainly has an argument; That’s a fairly sophisticated argumentative tactic, I thought;  
**Contextual (1):** I think I just kind of gave him credit ‘cause there is a structure and a sense of argument here;  

**Disagreements Second Time Period**  
**Textual (6):** And it’s argumentative; I thought that it speculative but maybe a little too informative instead of argumentative; I got the sense of an argument in here; The argument is there then; Not a well-supported argument; In terms of the argument itself, it’s there;  
**Contextual (1):** So I didn’t really see all that much of an argument in there; she had a sense of argument;  

**Article/Author/Readings/Source Citations (32)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**  
**Textual (1):** And she acknowledged the readings, which I liked as well;  

**Disagreements First Time Period**  
**Textual (6):** You’ve got very specific details here in support of the article; he starts off with establishing the article and what the author’s general premise was, and we do have an overall with the conclusion; I haven’t read the article; I’m trying to remember the reading; it does report quite a bit about what the authors have to say and on and on (RQ 7); He’s got a Works Cited page that doesn’t look have bad but not great  
**Contextual (7):** Even in the topic sentences, you do have basically…this is what the article says versus, you know, I think what she’s trying to say is implied; I gave her a lot of credit for doing that and for trying to, I guess, do a close reading of the article; I didn’t know if these were three people she had made up or they were three people from the reading; Would it affect your grading if it’s found in the reading because that means she copied; Like this writer acknowledges the reading, and then tries to talk through the reading, mentions the authors, and tries to connect that all up; So I guess I gave her a lot of credit for doing that and for trying to, I guess, do a close reading of the article; Exhibits language control and logical points raised, attempts to synthesize sources with experience;  

**Borderlines Second Time Period**  
**Textual (5):** Here “the article points out” instead of “the author points out”; It had a good introduction and acknowledges the source and introduces the topic; He has a nice command of vocabulary and integrates the source reading pretty well; My thing was she quoted this source and just threw them in there without any kind of; I thought that [quoting source] was kind of awkward;  
**Contextual (2):** Do you think that if we place this kid in 112 she would struggle [with outside sources]?; With outside sources; He uses the source; He knows to acknowledge the source;
Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (1): I will concede that these two paragraphs do rely real heavily on that Clark essay;
Contextual (10): He tries to talk about the article, too; And I think this one does a better job of trying to incorporate the source reading; she also incorporated the source, and I thought she did it pretty well. She gave the title, she gave the author, she acknowledged the point, and she tried to develop that point; I did like the fact that he tried to respond to the prompt reading (RQ 7); she does try to at least somehow acknowledge the reading, too; we’ve got the acknowledgement of the author; Well, definitely she knows how to cite the essay really well; She gives the title and the authors and everything; Maybe that could have been worded a little bit better, but what he is saying "I read this"[article]; she is trying to incorporate things; There was some sense of pulling things out and trying to say things; Especially this one where it’s all Clark. I mean it ends with a quote; she knows how to cite the essay really well;

Audience (10)

Borderlines First Time Period

Contextual (1): ‘Cause I’m not really sure who his audience is; Maybe instruction with audience;

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (3): Who’s the audience?; So there were audience issues, too. This made me laugh so much; It seems his audience. There are some audience issues;

Borderlines Second Time Period

Contextual (1): He has this sense of audience and being a member of a generation, and he presents these three adjectives, and then he uses;

Disagreements Second Time Period

Contextual (5): I thought there was a pretty strong sense of audience here because he’s clearly talking to college students; He knows his audience; I don’t know who her audience is because even down here parents again are referred to in that third person and then we get that switch that teacher [inaudible]. It just seems like there’s audience issues here. Who are you talking to?; This [audience] is one of the big things that are emphasized in 111; I remember thinking when I read this paragraph too where I thought this kind of demonstrated a good sense of audience in the sense that okay; So she has an audience in mind;

Awkwardness (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (3): There were a lot of sentences in here that just seemed either awkward; the paragraph breaks at times got awkward; I caught some awkward constructions;
Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): Is that awkward?; She would have these awkward sentences; this sentence is a little awkward; there would be these kind of awkward kind of sentence constructions;

Benefit/Need (5)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (3): I think we’re even saying the same thing, so it’s just a matter of does this person need to be in 110?; I thought maybe he could use more help; maybe 110 might be good for her;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): she can get tips from 111;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (1): Maybe some proofreading things; I thought proofreading and things like that need some work;

Body Paragraphs (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): It’s readable, and it sets up those three things in the body paragraphs okay;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): there’s no signal of movement between points or between the body and her conclusion; each paragraph does lead to the main point that she is trying to state to support her thesis;
Contextual (1): I thought that these were topic sentences that try to tell you what it is that he was trying to talk about in each of the body paragraphs;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): I didn’t see this idea here in the body paragraph when he said it’s a chance to expand their knowledge; did the other paragraphs did address this question;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Bothered (5)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (3): I was bothered with the third paragraph though ‘cause there are some repetitions there; I was bothered by the sentence-level stuff; I was bothered with this “environmental environment”;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (2): You know what bothered me about this one though was the introduction and conclusion; That puts me off

Can Live With/Could Live With/Can Go/Could Go/Talked Down/Talked Into/Talked Up (59)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (13): I could go with 111-; I could go with 110; I could go with 111-; I could go 111-; I could go with a 111-; I could go with a 111-; I could go with that; I could go to 111-; I could go for a strong 111; I could go with 111-. I could do that; I could probably do a 111; I could live with a 111-; I could live with that, too; I can probably be talked into a 111; I could probably get talked down to a 111+.

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (17): I could go with a 111+; I could go with a 111- because I could see that; I probably could go with 110+ now that I look at it; I could got for a 111; I could go up to 111; I could go with a low 111; I could go for that; I could go down; I could go with a 110+ on this; I could go with a 111+ because the sentences are pretty sophisticated; I could go with a 111+. I could do that; I can go with a straight 111; I think I can go for 111; I can go with that; I can live with that; I could live with a 111+; I could live with a 111+;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (15): I can probably be talked down; I could go with a 111-; I could go with a stronger 111 for this; I could go with a lower 111; I could probably be talked up to 112; I can go with a lower 111; I’m just trying to decide if I can go up to 112 or not; I can go with that; I can go with that; I can go with a 111+; I can go with that; I can go with that; I can go for that; I can go with a lower 111; I can go with you;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (12): I could go with a 111+; I could go with a minus; I could go with a weaker 111; I could do that; I could go up to 111+; I could go up to a 111- on this; I could go down to a 111; I
could go up to that; I could go for a lower 111; I can go with a lower 111; I can go for a 111; I can be talked up;

**Capitalization (2)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**
None

**Disagreements First Time Period**
**Textual (1):** all sorts of those kinds of word confusions and capitalizing “video games” sometimes and not other times;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**
None

**Disagreements Second Time Period**
**Textual (1):** you have some capitalization that doesn’t need to be there and everything;

**Choppiness of Writing (7)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**
**Textual (1):** My big thing was that it was really choppy;

**Disagreements First Time Period**
**Textual (4):** A little bit choppy; it’s choppy; The introduction to me seemed kind of choppy; Because it seems so choppy;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**
**Textual (1):** And that and the choppiness in some of the paragraphs;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**
**Textual (1):** choppy, and they followed the same patterns;

**Clarity/Readability (43)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**
**Textual (13):** I wasn’t really quite sure what he was arguing. Yeah. It was readable, but I was kind of like, “what are you saying now”; I thought maybe when I first read through it might be that you had noted on yours, too, just that idea that “what are you arguing here?” was so strong to me that I thought well maybe; The argument is pretty clear; It’s readable, and it sets up those three things in the body paragraphs okay; The essay lacks clear focus and support; He could have provided clear transitions as well; Clear focus and support but tends to jump around; Although it does need clear organization on this one; Clear focus, strong organization development; It’s clearly organized; Unclear reference; It’s readable, and it sets up those three things in the body paragraphs okay; I guess there were just times, as I read this, where I just asked myself, “What’s in this sentence?”;
**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (9):** sense of organization; I thought it was clear focus; Cause like the main points are not really that clearly presented for each paragraph to support the thesis; I didn’t understand what she was saying; easy to follow main points; I thought it was sophisticated, but she lost me a few times; I thought it was readable; she lost me a few times; Clear

**Contextual (1):** Clarity; essay not clear; it very clearly tries to respond to the prompt (RQ 7);

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (9):** I think it’s clearly focused; It has a clear, strong focus; clear focus; Unclear transitions in paragraph three; I think there were a lot of missing commas and things like that that made me stop as a reader sometimes to figure out what she was saying; As a whole although I can still follow her train of thought; I could read it; I plused this because it was certainly readable, but I didn’t see it; I know there was a weird sentence here at the end, but I have to reread again;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (12):** I thought that he jumps around a lot, and the focus is not clear; And I thought it was really clear who that “we” is; I kind of understood what he was doing here; I don’t know what that means; I don’t know what was going on there; I thought half of it was really good. And then half of it confused the hell out of me; This is very writer-based although I know what she means here; I out of me; I was just like, Huh?; I kind of see what he’s saying; it’s very readable prose; That was a really strange one. I don’t know what was going on there;

**Clauses/Phrases (16)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (1):** he’s got embedded clauses in between subjects and verbs pretty well;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (5):** I mean we’ve got a "therefore" clause; There are a lot of constructions like this where it’s like here we have a verb phrase and then a noun phrase and then a verb phrase again; sentences like these where we got like verb phrases and the list is consistent and the commas are there; Here’s a noun and then we have a verb phrase and then a noun phrase and then a comma afterwards; this is a fairly complex sentence cause we’ve got an embedded thing here with commas;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (2):** Now it’s not as noticeable because she’s got that phrase clustered in there, and if she were to have removed this, she wouldn’t have needed commas at all; you do have phrases like “drinking astonishing amount of highly carbonated soft drinks”;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (7):** she’s got that like embedded [sentences]; Like when I read something even like this last sentence where it’s got these embedded verb phrases; That “due to that” kind of embedded in there; Maybe they [points] are embedded with one another; A lot of sentence embeddings; I was
just fooled by this clause here. “Due to the many factors”; She would have a comma for this
introductory phrase but not for this one, and then have the commas surrounding;
Contextual (1): I think embedding these phrases he’s really good at, but when he tried to start
embedding too much, things got a little bit;

Coherent/Tied Together (5)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): It’s not well-tied together;
Contextual (1): He could have tied up the main points;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): some evidence of sophisticated writing although some things could be more
developed and more coherent; good logical connections

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): I think I’m giving him more credit than you are for the connections here;

Commas (20)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (5): When you look at this sentence, this is a fairly complex sentence cause we’ve got
an embedded thing here with commas; There were times when it seemed like the guy was
missing commas; Although you do have sentences like these where we got like verb phrases and
the list is consistent and the commas are there; Here’s a noun and then we have a verb phrase and
then a noun phrase and then a comma afterwards;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (9): She’s missing a comma; He has a lot of missing commas. I remember thinking
that; it just seems like we’re missing commas when we need commas; Whether it be the wealthy
comma, middle class or less wealthy comma…You know, in terms of that, it’s okay; there were
some missing commas that would help; I think there were a lot of missing commas and things
like that that made me stop as a reader sometimes to figure out what she was saying; you
mentioned that she could use more commas in there, maybe then perhaps a stronger 111?; Now
it’s not as noticeable because she’s got that phrase clustered in there, and if she were to have
removed this, she wouldn’t have needed commas at all; Wouldn’t that just be a comma there?;
Contextual (2): Well, he definitely knows…he has these introductory clauses, and he knows to
have commas after them before the noun and verbs, so he’s got that construction down; He has
the sense of what makes…how to use a comma;
Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (4): Missing commas; the commas were like real; She would have a comma for this introductory phrase but not for this one, and then have the commas surrounding. So it was like inconsistent usage; Just by reading the first paragraph, like this comma;

Comma Splices (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): the fragments and comma splices

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): because of the run ons and comma splices; I said comma splices;

Comparing Essays (5)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): do you think that this type of essay is equal to some of the 111s that we had;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (3): I mean there’s a lot of really good essays here in this second half, and this is one of them; There was a sentence with “plethora” in it that was just weird. We get a lot of papers with “plethora”; We put 111- on that earlier one. Let’s do that with this one, too. Because that way. That’s kind of consistent;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (1): reminded me again of that essay that we discussed;

Convince Myself (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (2): I’m trying to convince myself to give it a 110; I tried to convince myself to give it a 111-;

Disagreements First Time Period
None
Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Counterargument/Concession/Drawback (8)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (6): You mean like in the sense of a concession; It kind of has that sense of counterargument; It has a counterargument; I did mention the counterargument; She’s got counterargument at the end; And I liked the fact that she had a drawback paragraph, too; Contextual (1): I think this person like wouldn’t have a problem writing the essay or writing a counterargument or things like that;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): Concession

Creativity (9)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): I saw some of the ideas were expressed creatively; I thought this one was kind of creative; I thought the introduction was kind of creative; Contextual (1): It seems that the writer does seem to be creative;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): I wanted this to be a 112, but it just didn’t make it there, and it was creative though; I thought it was creative approach;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): I thought it wrapped it up kind of creatively in the conclusion; It’s a creative idea;

Curricular Exemplars (15)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (7): it’s a sandwich structure, where it’s like, he develops the problem, and then he has a separate paragraph where he kind of gives a solution, I guess (RQ 8); I remember this one
cause (RQ 8); One reason. Another reason, and now that I look through it again, I see some sentence things, they aren’t so bad that (RQ 8); she tried to come up with some sort of hierarchy, like she has the most obvious effect, and she started off with that right away (RQ 8); I did like “the last serious effect,” so she had these qualifiers (RQ 8); But this is what he was supposed to be doing right was speculating, so I mean, you know, he does speculate (RQ 8); there were fairly good things like he used “speculating” correctly (RQ 8);

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (2): attempts to synthesize sources with experience (RQ 8); there’s some sense of hierarchy of reasons (RQ 8);

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): You’re right about that. I thought the tone was good. I did think that the conclusion was lacking, too. It didn’t really seem to synthesize everything all together (RQ 8); Occasionally not always there were transitions like it had “another reason” (RQ 8);

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): I thought that it speculative but maybe a little too informative instead of argumentative (RQ 7, 8); Like possible valid and invalid causes (RQ 8); he says that, yeah, this is my position, but he goes back to “if we don’t do something now (RQ 8);
Contextual (1): She does try to speculate causes here (RQ 8);

Development/Length (68)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (18): The development, I thought, well it’s a five-paragraph essay, and the paragraphs themselves; Obviously, the development is not that strong; More development needed but exhibits language control; Development and paragraph formation are concerns, but it does answer the prompt; ‘Cause I know he could use more development for sure; Some points are really underdeveloped; It’s just the development is on the weak end, but I’ll go to 111--; I thought the structure was an issue and development, but I could go with a 111--; Clear focus, strong organization development; the development seemed good to me; It’s fairly well-developed; The development is a little eh; It’s not well-connected together, and the development was kind of weak, too; I mean the conclusion is a little underdeveloped there; It’s nicely developed; I can look at this again and go up because this was pretty well-developed and fairly competent; Strong focus and good development; There’s just not enough there;
Contextual (2): it’s a sandwich structure, where it’s like, he develops the problem, and then he has a separate paragraph where he kind of gives a solution, I guess; Do you think, with a little instruction in organization and development, maybe he could survive 111?;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (14): Development; development; excellent organization and development; it’s really well-developed; It’s a pretty well developed five-paragraph essay; I thought it was okay development-wise; the development was okay; I don’t know if the development and some sentence-level concerns kept me from giving this a 112; Good strong development; They’re [sentences] developed; some evidence of sophisticated writing although some things could be
more developed and more coherent; it was developed; It’s not well-developed, too; it’s not even well-developed as I said;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**  
**Textual (13):** I gave him the benefit of the doubt because it was fairly well-developed; It’s well developed and really focused too; I think if it were a little shorter and wasn’t as developed as a five paragraph kind of thing; it could maybe have more development, but I didn’t see any major glaring prose concerns, so. I could go with a 111-; It is pretty well-developed; It is developed; It was developed; I agree with you that it’s underdeveloped; Development was okay; But it’s a little underdeveloped; it is a bit underdeveloped; I think if it were a little shorter and wasn’t as developed as a five paragraph kind of thing, I probably would have gotten a 110; it is really short;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**  
**Textual (20):** I was looking at the organization and development; She should have provided transitions then, or even provided development; the development that’s lacking, but yeah, it’s not a strong 112; I felt like it’s kind of developed; I thought it was developed enough and structured enough that, and there are times; I felt like it was developed and structured and that the problems weren’t; the development is okay; it’s a five paragraph structure that was developed; The paragraphs all developed; she tried to develop that point; some ideas were more developed than others; I just was like development was like so; the development seemed okay to me; it’s not well-developed; it’s not well-developed; I understand what you’re saying about the development; and this was in a way, one long paragraph that she was just kind of expanding; I guess maybe it was just the length of it. I mean we have four paragraphs; Short; what I see is like the paragraphs are long at first and then they get shorter;

**Contextual (1):** She knows how to develop her ideas;

**Don’t Know Why (3)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**  
**Contextual (2):** I don’t know why I placed that; I’ve got a 112- for some reason. I don’t know why;

**Disagreements First Time Period**  
**Contextual (3):** I don’t know why. I have 110 here; I don’t know why; 112-. I don’t know why;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**  
None

**Disagreements Second Time Period**  
None

**Err on the Side of Caution (2)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**  
**Contextual (1):** I was just trying to err on the side of caution;
**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Contextual (1):** I was just trying to err on the side of caution;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

None

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

None

**Essay Structure/Organization/Basic Essay/Five Paragraph Structure (105)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (16):** The development, I thought, well it’s a five-paragraph essay, and the paragraphs themselves; It’s five paragraphs and the topic sentences; I have that five-paragraph essay structure; Well, it was a five paragraph essay; So it’s not as if it’s a real essay; Although I thought that the organization could be stronger, too, so; He could use organization of ideas; It’s clearly organized; I thought organization is a bit shaky, too; The thing that did it for me was like, it’s a sandwich structure, where it’s like, he develops the problem, and then he has a separate paragraph where he kind of gives a solution, I guess (RQ 8); Then we go back to the problem; it had a structure to it. It’s five paragraphs and the topic sentences; I thought the structure was an issue; A sense of structure; I have that five-paragraph essay structure; And there’s an argument in here although the structure itself was really strange; this did have an argument and a structure; it does have a structure;

**Contextual (3):** Do you think, with a little instruction in organization and development, maybe he could survive 111?; Although it does need clear organization on this one; strong organization; He knows how to organize; I think with a little instruction on rhetorical structures, he might survive in 111;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (23):** It seemed like a straight five paragraph essay where you have the three points, and you just kind of list them; the essay structure but it can be formulaic; Good essay structure; I was just looking at the structure; It was structured; Good essay structure; At the five-paragraph structure; I thought it had a five-paragraph structure; it’s all even kind of structured; I saw a five-paragraph structure; I thought there was a structure to this; it’s got a five-paragraph structure; It’s structured; It’s like the structure there and everything; It’s just he breaks it [essay] up too much; I was looking at the organization; I thought organization is solid; Organization; excellent organization; Clear sense of organization; needs organization; Good strong development, main ideas, and organization; It’s pretty much organized;

**Contextual (5):** He does understand organization; Do you see evidence that this person knows how to organize an essay?; I thought the organization was pretty decent; She understands essay, what an essay is; Needs to learn basic essay; needs to learn basic essay construction;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (16):** I mean there’s a lot of really good essays here in this second half, and this is one of them; Where are some of the sentences that you’ve noticed that are kind of awkward?; I
thought that [quoting source] was kind of awkward; Like five points; That was the one with the five points and the introduction and a conclusion; I think if it were a little shorter and wasn’t as developed as a five paragraph kind of thing, I probably would have gotten a 110; What I said was that it had a five paragraph structure; It was pretty organized; I thought it seems to contain good organization; I thought that it was properly organized; it could be better organized; I was just concerned with the pronoun shifts and the lack of organization; there is structure; It is structured well; there is a structure; it certainly has a structure;

Contextual (3): But he knows what a basic essay is; it [essay] is awkward at times; I think this person like wouldn’t have a problem writing the essay or writing a counterargument or things like that; he seems to understand how to organize;

Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (32): the five paragraph essay structure; the essay structure, but it’s not as sophisticated as; The essay contains solid structure; The essay structure is strong; Because the essay structure again seems to be on the right track; That’s the one with weird essay structure; it’s the standard five paragraph essay structure; it [essay] was pulled off fairly competently; I saw the five-paragraph essay structure being used here; Five paragraph structure with three points; Five paragraph structure with three points; It’s kind of five paragraph one; it’s a five paragraph structure that was developed; Five paragraph; it’s structured in a five paragraph way; I’ve got a 112 for her because it’s a neat five paragraph; It’s five paragraphs; But it’s still kind of a five paragraph; I thought at first that it has a solid structure; I thought it was developed enough and structured enough that; I felt like it was developed and structured and that the problems weren’t; I thought this had a pretty good structure, too; It’s definitely got a pretty good structure to it; basically the structure I was impressed with; it is pretty well structured; I thought it was kind of structured; displays some sense of organization; I was looking at the organization and development; I’ve got a 112- because of the organization of ideas; It needs organization; Because of the organization;

Contextual (4): It just seemed like one of those essays that was kind of written as she was thinking through it; I’ve got 111 because I said he could use more organization; she understands essay organization; Some people just don’t know how to organize their ideas; So she understands essay organization;

Focus/Jump Around (35)

Borderlines First Time Period

Contextual (3): I’m not sure of the main focus. If the main focus is. What do you think?; The essay lacks clear focus; the lack of focus is severe enough; This guy had a lot to say I thought, but you’re right, it kind of bounces around a bit; jumps around; tends to jump around; He tends to jump around; writer chooses a particular tack;

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (10): solid focus; Because the focus there; focus could be strengthened; I saw a little more focus in this; You mean to say it lacks focus?; There is focus; The main focus; So as far as the focus is concerned; I thought it was clear focus and interesting; I mean this person seemed have a lot to say, but it just seemed unfocused;
Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (13): I thought there’s consistent focus throughout; It’s well developed and really focused too; It has strong focus; I guess I was just confused with the focus in the end; I said I wasn’t sure what the focus is. That’s why I gave it a 110+; I think it’s clearly focused; It has a clear, strong focus; the focus was strong; What did you think of the focus? Maybe I missed something; Sentence structure, clear focus; It was jumbled up, so that kept me at 111+; All over the place; It does kind of bounce around;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (9): I thought that he jumps around a lot, and the focus is not clear; I thought that he was trying to focus on the fact that if people do smoke, it can become addicting like MySpace; The focus is there; needs to clarify focus; I’m trying to look at the focus of the essay, so she’s trying to suggest how to be financially independent; she changes her focus, but she tells you that; It might be a little jumbled; tends to ramble a bit; But it comes out of the blue;

Formulaic (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): it’s a bit formulaic;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): I do admit that’s [essay] kind of formulaic; I did admit it’s a bit formulaic; It is a bit formulaic though; it can be formulaic;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): It’s a little formulaic; Formulaic;

Fragments (10)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (4): There are some fragments; There are some fragments, too; Are there fragments and run ons?; I’ve got a 110 for **** because of the fragments and comma splices;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (6): Because I thought there were some run ons and fragments, too; there were some fragments; Like this is a fragment; That’s not a fragment; I wouldn’t say that’s a fragment; I noticed that [run ons and fragments] as well;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Hierarchy (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): she tried to come up with some sort of hierarchy, like she has the most obvious effect, and she started off with that right away (RQ 8);

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): he does have this hierarchy with the biggest factor, and he puts the biggest factor at the end (RQ 8);

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (1): she even tried to provide a hierarchy with the best (RQ 8);

Ideas (30)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): it might be that you had noted on yours, too, just that idea that “what are you arguing here?”; He does have creative ideas, too; The first reading I was expecting a different main idea because he was talking about; He could use organization of ideas;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (6): Good ideas; ideas seem randomly expressed; I saw some of the ideas were expressed creatively; demonstrates good writing skills but ideas could be arranged further; It seems some ideas; main ideas;
Contextual (1): that’s it’s kind of clever for her to make use of these three people to support her main idea, so you’ve got three main ideas;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (5): I didn’t see this idea here in the body paragraph when he said it’s a chance to expand their knowledge; ideas; What about her ideas? Is it sophisticated enough?; He only raised two points to support his main idea; I thought he’s got excellent ideas;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (11): It’s a creative idea; So it’s an interesting idea; Well, I like the idea; One was that the ideas seemed really repetitive; What about her main points, the main ideas that she raised?; I’ve got a 112- because of the organization of ideas; I put down she has a lot to say and some ideas were more developed than others; This idea of fitting in and this idea of knowledge; She has the introduction where she introduces the idea of having reasons, and she’s got a wrap up; I thought this kind of demonstrated a good sense of audience in the sense that okay, she’s transitioning to this alternative idea from the [inaudible] one; I really liked this introduction with the Summit County Board of Elections and how she used that to transition to this idea about budgeting
Contextual (3): She knows how to develop her ideas; Some people just don’t know how to organize their ideas; Right. And then she was thinking, “Okay. Now with the conclusion, I’ve got my ideas”;

Interesting (8)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (6): I did think it was interesting; I thought it was interesting image; Interesting points; He raised interesting points; she does have interesting thoughts; I thought it was clear focus and interesting;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): So it’s an interesting idea; this [introduction] is really interesting;

Introduction/Conclusion (49)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (9): He takes the chunks, and he kind of chunks them out in new paragraphs, and he chunks them again in the conclusion; It needs a stronger conclusion though. The conclusion is a little bit weak; it had an introduction and a conclusion; The conclusion leaves much to be desired. I mean the conclusion is a little underdeveloped there; I think he could use a concluding paragraph; Like is there really a conclusion here?; these last couple of sentences were a way of concluding it; There is an introduction; because it does kind of wrap up at the end;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (8): I guess because it had an introduction and conclusion sandwiching this, it lifted it to 111-; we do have an overall with the conclusion; And the conclusion; I thought more work needed to be done on the introduction and conclusion; there’s no signal of movement between points or between the body and her conclusion; I thought the introduction was kind of creative; The introduction to me seemed kind of choppy; the introduction seemed like it was kind of like;
Contextual (1): And then I think he did try to transition here into his conclusion;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (13): That was the one with the five points and the introduction and a conclusion; I had some sentence construction concerns especially with this conclusion with this; You’re right about that. I thought the tone was good. I did think that the conclusion was lacking, too. It didn’t really seem to synthesize everything all together (RQ 8); It had a good introduction and acknowledges the source and introduces the topic; I was really impressed with this introduction; And could it be, like I read this as a kind of way to introduce the topic; I got the idea that this was an introduction with a thesis; I like this introduction. I thought it was kind of clever; Because
I think this was directed at young adults, which she sets up in the opening paragraph; And then, have a concluding paragraph talking to teens; Because I think this was directed at young adults, which she sets up in the opening paragraph; Because I think this was directed at young adults, which she sets up in the opening paragraph; But reading sentences like in the conclusion and like I didn’t see anything dire in terms of spelling;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (18):** I kind of understood what he was doing here, but then I thought it wrapped it up kind of creatively in the conclusion, so I think I gave him the benefit of that; You know what bothered me about this one though was the introduction and conclusion. Like these general comments about money. “Money is one common item around the world”; the introduction and conclusion seemed like these real…like…like…um….choppy, and they followed the same patterns where she asks for the money; The essay structure is strong, but simplistic reasoning in the conclusion; She gives the title and the authors and everything, and this conclusion demonstrates that kind of nicely; She has that “in conclusion”; Like, we get this introduction, and I guess it ends with this thesis that computers are just, you know…Ihorrible things; Then she introduces yahoo messenger, which is what this paragraph about. Right? Then she talks about chat rooms, and then she talks about cheating on the internet; this was written while she was thinking about it because the introduction is very vague; the introduction is a little bit repetitive; But now that we read the introduction, I don’t think I can place this student in a 112; She has the introduction where she introduces the idea of having reasons, and she’s got a wrap up; I really liked this introduction with the Summit County Board of Elections and how she used that to transition to this idea about budgeting; I might have been giving a little bit too much credit for that kind of introduction; this [introduction] is really interesting; It’s not set up; I guess I was just reading the first paragraph. Maybe I was impressed with some of the vocabulary used like “coax” and all that, and she did forecast the main points and basically the structure I was impressed with; I thought he tied it up;

**Contextual (1):** And then she was thinking, “Okay. Now with the conclusion, I’ve got my ideas.” And then in the conclusion, everything…but then like, it’s like she never went back and tried to;

**Language Command/Control (4)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (1):** More development needed but exhibits language control;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (1):** Exhibits language control;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

None

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (2):** good command of language; And there is language control, too;
Like/Liked (6)

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Contextual (3):** And she acknowledged the readings, which I liked as well; I liked this one; The one thing that I did like about this one that I liked is that she tried to come up with some sort of hierarchy;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

None

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Contextual (2):** And I liked the fact that she had a drawback paragraph, too; I liked the fact that she did that;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Contextual (1):** I liked some of the things he had to say;

**Lists (2)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (1):** And sometimes when she gets these lists going together like she jams up a bunch of things, and they get a little screwy (RQ 7);

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (1):** Like you have those lists here (RQ 7);

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

None

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

None

**Narrative (1)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

None

**Disagreements First Time Period**

None

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Contextual (1):** good narrative skills (RQ 7);

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

None
On Topic (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): it is an extended argument that stays on topic (RQ 7);

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): It seems to be on topic but it’s off thesis (RQ 7); And the third paragraph. I’m not sure if this is the one or this one. It seems to be on topic but it’s off thesis (RQ 7);

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Paragraphs (67)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (13): The development, I thought, well it’s a five-paragraph essay, and the paragraphs themselves; It’s readable, and it sets up those three things in the body paragraphs okay; Development and paragraph formation are concerns, but it does answer the prompt; He takes the chunks, and he kind of chunks them out in new paragraphs, and he chunks them again in the conclusion; It’s five paragraphs and the topic sentences; I have that five-paragraph essay structure; Well, it was a five paragraph essay; That was paragraph four; because I think he could use a concluding paragraph; I was thinking 112 until I got to the last couple paragraphs on this one; I thought this might have been one of those ones that we were talking like the one paragraph 111 thing because it does kind of wrap up at the end where we have that transition; He needed a couple of more paragraph breaks, but he does have; We had that one paragraph one; Contextual (1): he knew enough where each little thing he wanted to talk about was a separate paragraph, so he knew enough about paragraphs;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (22): It’s a five-paragraph essay I thought; The paragraphs get shorter as we move along; At the five-paragraph structure; each paragraph does lead to the main point that she is trying to state to support her thesis; I thought it had a five-paragraph structure; It’s a five-paragraph essay; It’s a pretty well developed five-paragraph essay; I was bothered with the third paragraph though ‘cause there are some repetitions; she already expressed in the first paragraphs; It seemed like a straight five paragraph essay where you have the three points, and you just kind of list them; I saw a five-paragraph structure; it still seemed like a five-paragraph essay to me; There’s no real sense of movement from paragraph to paragraph; In terms of moving from paragraph to paragraph; like we were looking at that other paragraph from the other essay; I think this topic sentence isn’t bad for a topic sentence for a paragraph; I felt like the paragraphs; We’re were talking about that previous paragraph; it’s got a five-paragraph structure; I could see the argument and the paragraph formation; Cause like the main points are not really that clearly presented for each paragraph to support the thesis; all these paragraphs are pretty brief;
Contextual (3): the paragraph breaks at times got awkward, where it seems like he was splitting things up too much or something; I thought that these were topic sentences that try to tell you what it is that he was trying to talk about in each of the body paragraphs; she knows how to form paragraphs;

Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (19): Especially in paragraph two. I noticed that [run ons and fragments] as well; I noticed it [sentences] a lot in this paragraph, but there were other times where he did okay; I think if it were a little shorter and wasn’t as developed as a five paragraph kind of thing, I probably would have gotten a 110; What I said was that it had a five paragraph structure; I didn’t see this idea here in the body paragraph when he said it’s a chance to expand their knowledge; And I liked the fact that she had a drawback paragraph, too; he could use more transitions between paragraphs, but other than that, I think it’s clearly focused; I think what this person was trying to do was to establish what researchers had said and apply it in the following paragraph to her own experience; I thought that the sentences were weird in the last two paragraphs for some reason; And then, have a concluding paragraph talking to teens; Because these two paragraphs, they seem to make sense; I think what ultimately did it for me was I think in paragraph three; Unclear transitions in paragraph three; I was thinking 112 after I read the second paragraph, the ying and the yang thing. Isn’t that this one; The third paragraph wasn’t well connected to me; I think in some ways similar to yours especially this second paragraph I thought was really a concern with the flow of thought and the like; And that and the choppiness in some of the paragraphs; And the third paragraph. I’m not sure if this is the one or this one. It seems to be on topic but it’s off thesis; I think I understand what you’re saying about this paragraph, but I thought what she doing was kind of building upon the previous paragraph;

Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (19): I didn’t think the various paragraphs were well connected with one another; Then she introduces yahoo messenger, which is what this paragraph about. Right?; I guess maybe it was just the length of it. I mean we have four paragraphs; This paragraph, this middle one, was right out of nowhere. And I was like, What are you doing?; But these two paragraphs do kind of come out of nowhere; He kind of gets back to it in this paragraph. But it comes out of the blue; I remember reading this paragraph and going that first sentence is really strange; I don’t remember if this was the one where within the paragraphs it seemed like she was saying the same things again or; Just by reading the first paragraph, like this comma; The paragraphs all developed; in this first paragraph, I was concerned about pronouns because we go from “one” to “their” to “we”; I thought that the use of pronouns in this paragraph just seemed to get kind of screwy; In that paragraph, there was that screwy thing going on, and then a lot of times when she was joining things when “and,” she was like, okay here’s a noun, here’s a verb, and here’s a verb, and then we’re back to nouns; I guess I was just reading the first paragraph. Maybe I was impressed with some of the vocabulary used like “coax” and all that, and she did forecast the main points and basically the structure I was impressed with; this paragraph is talking about having a job versus job. And this one has to do with personality and what the person was likely to do; and this was in a way, one long paragraph that she was just kind of expanding, and then, as a result of this; I remember thinking when I read this paragraph too where I thought this kind of demonstrated a good sense of audience in the sense that okay; I will concede that these two paragraphs do rely real heavily on that Clark essay;
Parenthesis (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): In terms of textually speaking, he knew enough to create those borders, those parenthesis;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): And she’s using like the parenthesis for plural;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Personal Experience (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): He uses his personal experience to kind of help him (RQ 7);

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): I think what this person was trying to do was to establish what researchers had said and apply it in the following paragraph to her own experience (RQ 7);

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Point of View/Pronoun Shifts (12)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): This is the one where we started getting into these “yous,” too, where it was like there was these shifts;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (4): Although he does stick with the “you”; She’s talking about them in the third person here, and then it shifts at the end; it seemed like a number of times, we would go from the you to the they back to the you; I was just concerned with the pronoun shifts; My concern was you mentioned pronouns earlier. Like I noticed pronoun shifts several times;
Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (6): I was concerned about pronouns because we go from “one” to “their” to “we”; So there are a lot of pronoun shifts there?; I thought that the use of pronouns in this paragraph just seemed to get kind of screwy; I didn’t see the pronoun shifts; And there was some pronoun shifts. That’s the reason why. She was talking about the plural, third person plural and then; So there’s a [pronoun] shift there;

Contextual (1): It just seems like there’s audience issues here. Who are you talking to? Why does it keep shifting?;

Points (36)

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (3): Some points are really underdeveloped; He could have tied up the main points; This is the third point that he had; That doesn’t really lead to the next point;

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (14): easy to follow main points; She did use examples to illustrate her point; But do you think the main points that she came up with are original or are they derived from the text?; Because it seems to me that each of the person that she mentioned, it seems that they do have each paragraph, each paragraph does lead to the main point that she is trying to state to support her thesis; a straight five paragraph essay where you have the three points, and you just kind of list them; This is where he tries to express his main point; Interesting points; He raised interesting points; logical points raised; I said she raised good points; there’s no signal of movement between points; Main points to support thesis; Cause like the main points are not really that clearly presented for each paragraph to support the thesis; What are some of the negative points?;

Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (5): Like five points; That was the one with the five points; Some of the points need to be better connected; She did raise some good points; He only raised two points to support his main idea;

Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (14): easy to follow main points; She did use examples to illustrate her point; But do you think the main points that she came up with are original or are they derived from the text?; Because it seems to me that each of the person that she mentioned, it seems that they do have each paragraph, each paragraph does lead to the main point that she is trying to state to support her thesis; a straight five paragraph essay where you have the three points, and you just kind of list them; This is where he tries to express his main point; Interesting points; He raised interesting points; logical points raised; I said she raised good points; there’s no signal of movement between points; Main points to support thesis; Cause like the main points are not really that clearly presented for each paragraph to support the thesis; What are some of the negative points?;
Prompt (7)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): it does answer the prompt (RQ 7);

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): I guess I gave her a lot of credit because it very clearly tries to respond to the prompt, which is something that a lot of the other writers don’t do (RQ 7);

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (2): The prompt is “Why can’t students’ manage or budget money?” And could it be, like I read this as a kind of way to introduce the topic; my question was, is the answer to the prompt implied? (RQ 7); did the other paragraphs did address this question [prompt]? (RQ 7)

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (3): And he does address the prompt (RQ 7); I mean it’s not a perfect response to the prompt (RQ 7); she is trying to provide reasons why people can’t manage their money (prompt) (RQ 7);

Questions (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): But like, he would have these questions. Then he would say, “I need to wake up early to study. I forgot to bake cookies for my science class.” “So many questions can weigh on a person’s mind; well we had questions several sentences ago, and then we get these two statements, and then he says “many questions” and then we get that; She keeps on asking questions;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): When he had like these kinds of rhetorical questions;

Repetition (8)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): And it was repetitive at times;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): he did repeat that a lot of times; there are some repetitions there;
Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): It’s like that was kind of repetitive in a way; I mean it’s kind of a complex thing, but like, she gets a little repetitive here, where she says, “The Internet offers many applications.” [Reads quickly from essay]; That “all, such, many thing” starts getting a little repetitive.

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): She did repeat some of the main points there; One was that the ideas seemed really repetitive; Repetitive?; the introduction is a little bit repetitive. It’s really repetitive;

Report (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): it does report quite a bit about what the authors have to say and on and on (RQ 7);

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): So we get the book report about who invented the web (RQ 7);

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Run Ons (12)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): Are there fragments and run ons?; There are run ons but very few

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (4): Because I thought there were some run ons and fragments, too; I noticed that [run ons and fragments] as well; My reason is because of the run ons; there are some run ons; Contextual (2): There were some run ons, but they didn’t seem so bad to me that it would warrant 110 consideration; Maybe he can get training with the run ons to do conferences then with the teacher in 111;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (4): I’ve got a 110 for *** for some reason because of the run ons and comma splices; I see some run ons; And the run ons. There are a couple of them, but they’re not scattered throughout;
Screwy (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): I guess my thing was the sentences themselves seemed a little screwy to me at times; she jams up a bunch of things, and they get a little screwy; I was a little screwy on this one, too, because I was thinking 111-, as well;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): it’s kind of screwy; this paragraph just seemed to get kind of screwy; there was that screwy thing going on;

Semicolons (7)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): Is this the one that uses the semicolon?; Do you remember that one, that semicolon was just over and over again;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): I wouldn’t use a semicolon here; I don’t know about you; There were these semicolons where apostrophes should be;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): we’ve got a pretty good use of a semicolon; Semicolons used correctly although this sentence is a little awkward;

Sentence/Syntax Issues (142)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (25): But although like looking at the sentences themselves; There’s not many sentence-level issues; Did you see some sentence like, you know, sentence-level…that can also…I might have missed that, too; But when I read through this, I mean sentence wise, I don’t really see the sentence problems; And we’ve got the topic sentences and everything; It’s five paragraphs and the topic sentences; there are just enough sentence-level things; What got me over to 111, the sentences didn’t seem to bad to me; It does try to argue things without too many sentences; I guess my thing was the sentences themselves seemed a little screwy to me at times; The only thing that held me back was the sentence-level concerns, but maybe I can look at this again and go up because this was pretty well-developed and fairly competent; This sentence here seemed a
little odd, and then one here, where she’s trying to link things up; It might need some sentence-level issues though; There were some sentences like this one [Reads quickly from essay]. There were several sentences like that where they were a little clunky for me, so I kind of kept in 111; I guess for me, I was kind of on the edge, but for me, he pulled off sentences like this, where he’s got embedded clauses in between subjects and verbs pretty well. When I see a sentence like this pulled off pretty well, I mean it seems like; the sentences were constructed pretty well; I think the sentences held me back from a 112-; I guess there were just times, as I read this, where I just asked myself, “What’s in this sentence?”; There were just sentences like that; well we had questions several sentences ago, and then we get these two statements, and then he says “many questions” and then we get that; The argument is pretty clear, but my big thing was just the sentences themselves; I think my objection was ultimately really just the sentences themselves; Another reason, and now that I look through it again, I see some sentence things, they aren’t so bad that; And I guess the sentence-level things aren’t too bad, and these last couple of sentences were a way of concluding it; I just noted a few syntax faults but it’s not severe though;

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (50): there must be the sentence-level; there were a lot of spelling and sentence concerns for me; My big thing was the sentence level concerns; There were a lot of sentences in here that just seemed either awkward or not well put together or kind of long; I was probably reacting a little too much to the sentence level; There were like sentences where it would just go on and on and on; The sentence structure; When you look at this sentence, this is a fairly complex sentence cause we’ve got an embedded thing here with commas; I mean there are times when sentences seem a little…There are other times, I mean we’ve got a “therefore clause,” you know; Now that you pointed out the sentence-level things; And I think the sentence level is not severe though that he; sentence level; there are some sentence-level things that I can see, too; And some of these sentences go, “da da da da da da,” kind of on and on and on; it’s not really that severe as far as sentence-level issues; I think sentences are not that bad, but there are some sentence-level issues going on there; I saw some sentence-level issues; Although it’s [sentence-level issues] not severe; There are sentence-level problems; I thought sometime the sentence constructions were a little bit off; there were some times where the sentences sometimes seemed like a little bit off; There were some sentence level concerns; I thought you meant between sentences; I was bothered by the sentence-level stuff; Even in the topic sentences; Although I did in this one, too, have sentence concerns on it; I thought that these were topic sentences that try to tell you what it is that he was trying to talk about in each of the body paragraphs; The question, I think, do the sentences?; some of the sentences; Like there were a lot of sentence level things; The only thing I wrote down was just “sentence-level concerns”; I guess when I read this I felt like there’s just so many sentence-level things for me, I just went “well.”; the sentence structure is problematic; some sentence-level things; Although you do have sentences like these where we got like verb phrases and the list is consistent and the commas are there; I don’t know how severe they [sentence constructions] are. I mean you have some fairly, like this sentence; Cause there were sentences like this one; I agree with that, and the sentence construction was a concern, too; now that I’m looking at the sentences, I may be a little too harsh on that, but I kind of don’t see this as a 112; And just looking through it again, I remember sentences like this; She just kind of has these sentences in place. Yeah. They’re [sentences] developed, and the sentences look okay, but there’s no sense of movement; I could go with a 111+ because the sentences are pretty sophisticated; I guess there were enough sentence-level things like “this is especially being the
case” or “one day being dashed”; And then she says in the next sentence, “A few of these sleeping problems” Well, what sleeping problems is she talking about because it seems like she’s trying to link it up with this sentence, but this sentence doesn’t; I had some sentence concerns in this one; there were a number of those sentences where it was kind of like; It has topic sentences and the basic numbering kinds of transitions in here; Some obvious syntax faults; There are some syntax faults, but it’s not as severe as other 110; Some syntax faults;

**Contextual (2):** I think this topic sentence isn’t bad for a topic sentence for a paragraph, and it’s coordinating two complete sentences with a however, and it’s pulled off well; I don’t know if the development and some sentence-level concerns kept me from giving this a 112;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (37):** I think there were a lot of sentence concerns. Like I remember reading through there and thought that there were enough, and you must have something, too; there were several sentences that were like dah, dah, dah, dah, dah, dah, dah, dah, dah; It’s just the sentences sometimes. I noticed it [sentences] a lot in this paragraph, but there were other times where he did okay; There are some sentence boundary issues; This sentence? That’s not a fragment; There were topic sentences; It has enough sentence level things to warrant, but it was close; I guess the transitions and sentence concerns were like the two major things for me; I know there was a weird sentence here at the end, but I have to reread again; This is a really long sentence; it’s not that the sentences are bad, but like it just seems like we’re missing commas when we need commas; I wasn’t sure if this sentence, to me; I just think there’s enough sentence things; Some of the sentences were a little weird in this; I had some sentence construction concerns especially with this conclusion with this; Now you mentioned there are sentence structures, and I didn’t even catch that, um. Do you think it’s severe? Because that can also be a factor; There was a sentence with “plethora” in it that was just weird. We get a lot of papers with “plethora”; I remember reading that sentence; For me, the sentence level things were kind of; Where are some of the sentences that you’ve noticed that are kind of awkward?; Well, this sentence here. I mean it’s kind of a complex thing, but like, she gets a little repetitive here, where she says, “The Internet offers many applications”; I didn’t mention anything about the sentences; I thought that the sentences were weird in the last two paragraphs for some reason; Maybe I get hung up a little bit too much on those sentences sometimes; that’s good [emphasis on sentences] because that’s supposed to be my primary concern; But reading sentences like in the conclusion and like I didn’t see anything dire in terms of spelling; I mean there was that weird “chosen,” but there weren’t overly weird spellings or sentence constructions; Sentence structure; these are topic sentences; And there’s not many sentence-level errors; I didn’t see really big sentence concerns for me; This has topic sentences, too; It had a lot of sentence concerns for me; I don’t know if the sentence-level concerns aren’t as severe; It’s not a sentence that’s constructed real well that’s all; Some sentence structure faults that; I guess the frequent sentence level concerns weren’t prevalent enough for me to think that it needed 110 attention;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (27):** I missed the sentence level issue; My big thing was just the sentence concerns; Well, certainly, like these sentences are…she’s got that like embedded [sentences]; There were frequent sentence concerns; I remember reading this paragraph and going that first sentence is really strange; I thought that this sentence here goes on and on; we’ve got a pretty good use of a semicolon and that sentence works; some frequent sentence concerns; I guess I had some
sentence concerns, too; Like when I read something even like this last sentence where it’s got these embedded verb phrases; A lot of sentence embeddings; But there were just a lot of sentence-level things for me kind of kept this; She would have these awkward sentences like; That’s a fairly complex sentence there; Semicolons used correctly although this sentence is a little awkward; Literally in that one sentence; I had a lot of questions about some sentence level things; Mine was sentence level issues are evident; And some of the sentences were simplistic although it’s not problematic; I thought that this last sentence was really weird; Especially this last sentence; And then she would have a few sentences that were pretty strong, and it was like this back and forth, back and forth; there would be these kind of awkward kind of sentence constructions; Good points raised but some sentence level errors could be distracting; I didn’t really find the sentence level stuff too bad; I said distracting syntax faults; I mean the syntax is not severe;

**Contextual (1):** I saw him attempting really elaborate sentences, but sometimes, they really didn’t really work out;

**Severity/Pervasiveness (22)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (10):** the lack of focus is severe enough; Clear focus and support but tends to jump around; Clear focus; Strong focus; What about her focus though?; It’s a pretty strong 111, but there are just enough sentence-level things; I just didn’t feel like it was severe enough to warrant a 110; There were just enough of those I thought, “Well”; it might not be strong enough; I just noted a few syntax faults but it’s not severe though;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (3):** I think the sentence level is not severe; not as severe as other 110; it’s not really that severe as far as sentence-level issues; Although it’s [sentence-level issues] not severe; I don’t know how severe they [sentence constructions] are;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (8):** It has enough sentence level things to warrant, but it was close; There were some run ons, but they didn’t seem so bad to me that it would warrant 110 consideration; There were these semicolons where apostrophes should be. It didn’t to me seem like it warranted a 110 necessarily; Now you mentioned there are sentence structures, and I didn’t even catch that, um. Do you think it’s severe? Because that can also be a factor; I don’t know if the sentence-level concerns aren’t as severe; I guess the frequent sentence level concerns weren’t prevalent enough for me to think that it needed 110 attention; So it’s not as severe as a usual 110; I didn’t think it was severe enough;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (1):** It’s not so severe though;

**Sophistication (18)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (2):** And it’s not as sophisticated as it should be; At least sophisticated
Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (12): Now at least going back to 112, it has to be at least sophisticated; So not as sophisticated as a 112 should be; we have to see what a 112 is. It’s like, it has to be at least sophisticated; It’s really not that sophisticated; It’s not too sophisticated for a 112; they’re not sophisticated; I thought it was sophisticated, but she lost me a few times; it’s not so sophisticated; I could go with a 111+ because the sentences are pretty sophisticated; Not as sophisticated as what a 112; some evidence of sophisticated writing; On second reading, it does not exhibit a very sophisticated type of writing;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): Is it sophisticated enough to be placed?; apart from it’s sophistication; That’s a fairly sophisticated argumentative tactic;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): it’s not as sophisticated as;

Spelling (8)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): Some spelling errors;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): It just seemed like there were a lot of spelling;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): where he was spelling you and you; I didn’t see anything dire in terms of spelling; there weren’t overly weird spellings;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): There were a lot of misspellings; some of those spelling things; I can see with the spelling what you are saying;

Support/Examples (26)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): The essay lacks clear focus and support; Clear focus and support;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (11): that’s it’s kind of clever for her to make use of these three people to support her main idea, so you’ve got three main ideas; They do support; You’ve got very specific details here in support of the article; Main points to support thesis; Cause like the main points are not really that clearly presented for each paragraph to support the thesis; He uses examples I thought pretty good; It looks like this person used examples, so she used examples; She did use examples to illustrate her point; Are ones that she made up, it looks like; But do you think the main points that she came up with are original or are they derived from the text?; If it’s not that original because it seems that original reading does have people to that;
Contextual (1): each paragraph does lead to the main point that she is trying to state to support her thesis; I didn’t know if these were three people she had made up or they were three people from the reading;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): He only raised two points to support his main idea; Maybe some more work on transitions like. He went into this example with his friend, and he talks about paying for a video game, and then he kind of shifts back over to this argument without any kind of marker of doing that;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (7): And it’s the major part of his support, you know; What about her main points, the main ideas that she raised? Do they really support the thesis?; Not a well-supported argument; He had some examples to illustrate his point; And it’s the major part of his support, you know; What about her main points, the main ideas that she raised? Do they really support the thesis?; Not a well-supported argument;

Survival/Struggle of Writer (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (2): Do you think, with a little instruction in organization and development, maybe he could survive 111?; I think with a little instruction on rhetorical structures, he might survive in 111;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): Do you think that if we place this kid in 112 she would struggle [with outside sources]?

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Thesis/Forecast (18)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (6): Because I’m not really sure of the thesis; I can go with 110 cause it needs a solid thesis though; needs solid thesis; I’m not really sure if the thesis is in the beginning and the end matches; I just thought that the thesis could be stronger; The only comment I have is the thesis;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (4): each paragraph does lead to the main point that she is trying to state to support her thesis; I thought though that he had a thesis, topic sentences, development; Main points to support thesis; Cause like the main points are not really that clearly presented for each paragraph to support the thesis;
Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): I got the idea that this was an introduction with a thesis; It seems to be on topic but it’s off thesis.
Contextual (1): She’s trying to discuss why students cannot budget money;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (5): Like, we get this introduction, and I guess it ends with this thesis that computers are just, you know...horrible things; I almost forgot what the thesis was because I was expecting him to talk about MySpace, and he did talk about that here; Do they really support the thesis?; He didn’t even forecast that; she did forecast the main points and basically the structure I was impressed with;

Tone (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): I thought he had a nice tone and voice;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): I thought the tone was good;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): I liked his critical tone;

Too Harsh//Too Strict/Too Lax/Too Much Credit (15)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (4): I might be too harsh; I might be too harsh; I might be too harsh; I might need be too lax with him;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (5): I may be a little too harsh on that; I might be too harsh; I may be a little too harsh on that; I might be a little strict on this; I was probably a little hard on that;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (2): I’m being a little bit too hard on that; maybe I’m being too hard;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (4): maybe I’m a little bit hard; I think I’m being too strong; Maybe I’m giving her too much credit; I might have given this author too much credit;
Topic Sentences (15)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): And we’ve got the topic sentences and everything; It’s five paragraphs and the topic sentences;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (6): there were topic sentences; I thought though that he had a thesis, topic sentences, development; it’s got topic sentences; I think this topic sentence isn’t bad for a topic sentence for a paragraph, and it’s coordinating two complete sentences with a however, and it’s pulled off well; She has topic sentences; I see transitions and sense of topic sentences;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (4): There were topic sentences; these are topic sentences; This has topic sentences, too; And like we have topic sentences;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): There are topic sentences and the development is okay; topic sentences and the development seemed okay to me;
Contextual (1): she had a sense of the topic sentence;

Training/Norming Session (1)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): You know, this reminds me of the one we looked at the other day as a group (RQ 4);

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Transitions/Movement (29)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): He could have provided clear transitions as well. He tends to jump around; He’s already got basic transitions, “first” and “finally”; He had the basic transitions; we have that transition, like based on these facts;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (13): Although the transitions aren’t there, right?; He gets “the second” and then you get the “finally” (transitions); even the transitions like they’re there, and I give them credit for
having them there, but they’re not sophisticated; I didn’t see the transitions; Although you could
maybe use some transitions in here; Maybe I would have wanted to see some transitional
devices; It’s got that basic numbering transitions: first, second, third; I didn’t see any transitions;
I see transitions and sense of topic sentences; I see transitions and sense of topic sentences;
There’s no real sense of movement from paragraph to paragraph; there’s no signal of movement
between points or between the body and her conclusion; the sentences look okay, but there’s no
sense of movement;
**Contextual (1):** he did try to transition here into his conclusion;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (6):** Occasionally not always there were transitions like it had “another reason” (RQ 8);
I guess the transitions and sentence concerns were like the two major things for me; he could use
more transitions between paragraphs; there really wasn’t any transition between the two; Maybe
some more work on transitions like; Unclear transitions in paragraph three;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (5):** She should have provided transitions then, or even provided development; these
two transitions to me kind of suggest she’s building upon the same point; Maybe transitions
could have helped it more; I thought this kind of demonstrated a good sense of audience in the
sense that okay, she’s transitioning to this alternative idea from the [inaudible] one; I really liked
this introduction with the Summit County Board of Elections and how she used that to transition
to this idea about budgeting;

**Voice (2)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

None

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Contextual (1):** I thought he had a nice tone and voice;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

None

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Contextual (1):** I kind of liked the attitude that was in there. I thought he was really questioning
things in a strong voice;

**Weird/Quirky/Strange/Odd (35)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (3):** This is that weird one; That was weird; this is weird;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (7):** it’s not like he starts talking about really weird things; This was weird; Now that’s
kind of weird; It’s a weird essay. It was weird when I was reading it cause I did think it was
interesting; This one was weird; This is one of those several ones that were really weird; Like there were all sorts of quirky things that like just seemed to me to…you know, 111 I think;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (13):** I know there was a weird sentence here at the end, but I have to reread again; What do you mean by “this”? [Reads placement essay]. That’s kind of weird to me; Some of the sentences were a little weird in this; That’s kind of weird; There was a sentence with “plethora” in it that was just weird; That was weird. A wrong use; I thought that the sentences were weird in the last two paragraphs for some reason; And of course there are weird margins; There were weird things about this, but then; I mean there was that weird “chosen,” but there weren’t overly weird spellings or sentence constructions; That was odd; That one seems kind of odd to me; That was odd;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (12):** this one was weird; This is that smoking weird; But I thought this was weird. He mentioned “finally” twice; there were these weird like kind of put together with an “and” (coordination); It’s weird; I thought that this last sentence was really weird; This one was weird; That’s the one with weird essay structure; But if you think about it, this is really weird; This was strange; That was a really strange one. I don’t know what was going on there; This one was strange;

**Word Choice/Word Usage/Vocabulary (40)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (5):** Good vocabulary; I was just impressed that she had good vocabulary; There is a vocabulary; There were have way decent words he was using and using correctly, and I didn’t see; That “work field” was [a] kind awkward (word);

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (13):** I put down that the vocabulary was sometimes good; The vocabulary was used right, and it was fairly good; the vocabulary wasn’t too bad on this one; it had a pretty good command of vocabulary; there was some good vocabulary in here; there was a really good vocabulary in here; This is the “while/will” one; There was a while/will confusion, and there was also like another word that he was confusing--were/where; This is “where”… And yeah, and there were “where/were” things, “while/wills” and all sorts of; there’s all sorts of those kinds of word confusions; he does use words like “prospective freshman,” “budgeted life”; I noticed some good word choices and the like, but at times, I didn’t understand what she was saying; “Affects” for “effects” (word choice);

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (10):** good vocabulary; some good vocabulary; He has a nice command of vocabulary; her vocabulary; The thing that frustrated me was there were like missing words; Like there would be a lot of “ofs” or “toos” or things that should have been there; Function words; "Chat room" could be one word; I remember “that chosen” where it was like two words (words); There was a sentence with “plethora” in it that was just weird. We get a lot of papers with “plethora”;}
Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (8): So it was like inconsistent usage; Definitely the vocabulary is pretty strong; Maybe I was impressed with some of the vocabulary used like “coax” and all that; “First hand” is two words; I do remember this, and there were a couple things that struck me as a little odd like this “texting messaging” and [Inaudible] (word choice); “Where” for “were” and a lot of sentence level details (word choice); Too wordy? You think?; Maybe that could have been worded a little bit better, but what he is saying ‘I read this’ [article];

Writer Based (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): It’s all writer-based; That’s writer based;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (4): It just seemed like one of those essays that was kind of written as she was thinking through it; this was written while she was thinking about it; I thought it’s more writer based, but I could be wrong; This is very writer-based although I know what she means here; So it’s kind of writer-based although she is trying to incorporate things;

Writing Ability/Competence of Student (12)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): this was pretty well-developed and fairly competent;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (4): Do you see evidence that this person knows how to organize an essay?; there is a lot that this writer is trying to do; I mean I do remember thinking this seemed pretty competent; It’s definitely fairly competent;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (5): Do you think that if we place this kid in 112 she would struggle [with outside sources]?; Struggle with the idea; he definitely knows…he has these introductory clauses, and he knows to have commas after them before the noun and verbs, so he’s got that construction down; But he knows what a basic essay is; He knows to acknowledge the source; I think this person like wouldn’t have a problem writing the essay or writing a counterargument or things like that;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (2): This was competently written; it [essay] was pulled off fairly competently;


Pair 3: 111 Frequency Codebooks

Each codebook contains the frequency that each individual criterion was invoked in placement discussions overall, in borderline discussions, and in discussions during the first half (June 12-June 22) and second half (June 26-July 19) of the Placement Program. Frequencies are meant to be general approximations; all frequencies are rounded up to the nearest half-point; therefore, the frequencies in any given codebook do not total 100%.

Overall

Sentence/Syntax Issues: 12%
Essay Structure/Organization/Basic Essay/Five Paragraph Structure: 9%
Development/Length: 6%
Paragraphs: 6%
Can Live With/Could Live With/Can Go/Could Go/Talked Down/Talked Into/Talked Up: 5%
Introduction/Conclusion: 4%
Clarity/Readability: 4%
Points: 3%
Argument: 3%
Article/Author/Readings/Source Citations: 3%
Focus/Jump Around: 3%
Weird/Quirky/Strange/Odd: 3%
Word Choice/Word Usage/Vocabulary: 3%
Ideas: 2.5%
Transitions/Movement: 2.5%
Commas: 2%
Severity/Pervasiveness: 2%
Support/Examples: 2%
Sophistication: 1.5%
Thesis/Forecast: 1.5%
Audience: 1%
Too Harsh/Too Strict/Too Lax/Too Much Credit: 1%
Clauses/Phrases: 1%
Creativity: 1%
Counterargument/Concession/Drawback: 1%
Curricular Exemplars: 1%
Fragments: 1%
Point of View/Pronoun Shifts: 1%
Run Ons: 1%
Repetition: 1%
Topic Sentences: 1%
Writing Ability/Competence of Student: 1%
Writer Based: 0.5%
Apostrophes: 0.5%
Body Paragraphs: 0.5%
Awkwardness: 0.5%
Choppiness of Writing: 0.5%
Formulaic: 0.5%
Interesting: 0.5%
Like/Liked: 0.5%
Spelling: 0.5%
Prompt (RQ 7): 0.5%
Benefit/Need: < 0.5%
Screwy: 0.5%
Semicolons: 0.5%
Bothered: < 0.5%
Capitalization: < 0.5%
Coherent/Tied Together: < 0.5%
Comma Splices: < 0.5%
Comparing Essays: < 0.5%
Convince Myself: < 0.5%
Don’t Know Why: < 0.5%
Err on the Side of Caution: < 0.5%
Hierarchy: < 0.5%
Language Control/Command: < 0.5%
Lists (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Narrative (RQ 7): < 0.5%
On Topic (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Parenthesis: < 0.5%
Personal Experience (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Questions: < 0.5%
Report (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Survival/Struggle of Writer: < 0.5%
Tone: < 0.5%
Training/Norming Sessions: < 0.5%
Voice: < 0.5%
Borderlines

Sentence/Syntax Issues: 12%
Essay Structure/Organization/Basic Essay/Five Paragraph Structure: 7%
Paragraphs: 6%
Can Live With/Could Live With/Can Go/Could Go/Talked Down/Talked Into/Talked Up: 5%
Introduction/Conclusion: 4%
Clarity/Readability: 4%
Severity/Pervasiveness: 3.5%
Argument: 3%
Development/Length: 3%
Focus/Jump Around: 3%
Weird/Quirky/Strange/Odd: 3%
Word Choice/Word Usage/Vocabulary: 3%
Commas: 2%
Curricular Exemplars: 2%
Ideas: 2%
Transitions/Movement: 2%
Thesis/Forecast: 2%
Article/Author/Readings/Source Citations: 1.5%
Point of View/Pronoun Shifts: 1.5%
Counterargument/Concession/Drawback: 1%
Benefit/Need: 1%
Fragments: 1%
Like/Liked: 1%
Points: 1%
Run Ons: 1%
Sophistication: 1%
Spelling: 1%
Support/Examples: 1%
Too Harsh/Too Strict/Too Lax/Too Much Credit: 1%
Topic Sentences: 1%
Writing Ability/Competence of Student: 1%
Body Paragraphs: 0.5%
Clauses/Phrases: 0.5%
Comparing Essays: 0.5%
Creativity: 0.5%
Prompt (RQ 7): 0.5%
Questions: 0.5%
Repetition: 0.5%
Screwy: 0.5%
Semicolons: 0.5%
Survival/Struggle of Writer: 0.5%
Apostrophes: < 0.5%
Audience: < 0.5%
Awkwardness: < 0.5%
Bothered: < 0.5%
Capitalization: < 0.5%
Choppiness of Writing: < 0.5%
Coherent/Tied Together: < 0.5%
Comma Splices: < 0.5%
Convince Myself: < 0.5%
Don’t Know Why: < 0.5%
Err on the Side of Caution: < 0.5%
Formulaic: < 0.5%
Hierarchy: < 0.5%
Interesting: < 0.5%
Language Control/Command: < 0.5%
Lists (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Narrative (RQ 7): < 0.5%
On Topic (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Parenthesis: < 0.5%
Personal Experience (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Report (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Tone: < 0.5%
Training/Norming Sessions: < 0.5%
Voice: < 0.5%
Writer Based: < 0.5%
First Half

Sentence/Syntax Issues: 13%
Essay Structure/Organization/Basic Essay/Five Paragraph Structure: 8%
Paragraphs: 7%
Development/Length: 6%
Can Live With/Could Live With/Can Go/Could Go/Talked Down/Talked Into/Talked Up: 5%
Clarity/Readability: 4%
Points: 3%
Transitions/Movement: 3%
Argument: 3%
Word Choice/Word Usage/Vocabulary: 3%
Introduction/Conclusion: 3%
Article/Author/Readings/Source Citations: 2.5%
Sophistication: 2.5%
Support/Examples: 2%
Severity/Pervasiveness: 2%
Thesis/Forecast: 2%
Weird/Quirky/Strange/Odd: 2%
Focus/Jump Around: 2%
Ideas: 2%
Too Harsh/Too Strict/Too Lax/Too Much Credit: 1.5%
Topic Sentences: 1.5%
Curricular Exemplars (RQ 8): 1.5%
Choppiness of Writing: 1%
Clauses/Phrases: 1%
Coherent/Tied Together: 1%
Commas: 1%
Don’t Know Why: 1%
Body Paragraphs: 1%
Formulaic: 1%
Fragments: 1%
Interesting: 1%
Writing Ability/Competence of Student: 1%
Audience: 0.5%
Screwy: 0.5%
Questions: 0.5%
Repetition: 0.5%
Awkwardness: 0.5%
Benefit/Need: 0.5%
Bothered: 0.5%
Creativity: 0.5%
Like/Liked: 0.5%
Counterargument/Concession/Drawback: < 0.5%
Err on the Side of Caution: < 0.5%
Hierarchy: < 0.5%
Apostrophes: < 0.5%
Capitalization: < 0.5%
Comma Splices: < 0.5%
Comparing Essays: < 0.5%
Convince Myself: < 0.5%
Language Control/Command: < 0.5%
Lists (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Narrative (RQ 7): < 0.5%
On Topic (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Parenthesis: < 0.5%
Personal Experience (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Point of View/Pronoun Shifts: < 0.5%
Prompt (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Report (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Run Ons: < 0.5%
Semicolons: < 0.5%
Spelling: < 0.5%
Survival/Struggle of Writer: < 0.5%
Tone: < 0.5%
Training/Norming Sessions (RQ 4): < 0.5%
Voice: < 0.5%
Writer Based: < 0.5%
Second Half

Sentence/Syntax Issues: 11%
Essay Structure/Organization/Basic Essay/Five Paragraph Structure: 9%
Paragraphs: 6%
Development/Length: 5.5%
Introduction/Conclusion: 5%
Can Live With/ Could Live With/ Can Go/ Could Go/ Talked Down/ Talked Into/ Talked Up: 4%
Weird/ Quirky/ Strange/ Odd: 4%
Focus/ Jump Around: 3.5%
Word Choice/ Word Usage/ Vocabulary: 3%
Article/ Author/ Readings/ Source Citations: 3%
Clarity/ Readability: 3%
Points: 3%
Ideas: 3%
Commas: 2.5%
Transitions/ Movement: 2%
Argument: 2%
Clauses/ Phrases: 2%
Point of View/ Pronoun Shifts: 2%
Curricular Exemplars (RQ 8): 1.5%
Support/ Examples: 1.5%
Severity/ Pervasiveness: 1.5%
Run Ons: 1.5%
Thesis/ Forecast: 1%
Fragments: 1%
Spelling: 1%
Semicolons: 1%
Repetition: 1%
Prompt (RQ 7): 1%
Audience: 1%
Counterargument/ Concession/ Drawback: 1%
Writer Based: 1%
Writing Ability/ Competence of Student: 1%
Creativity: 1%
Too Harsh/ Too Strict/ Too Lax/ Too Much Credit: 1%
Topic Sentences: 1%
Like/ Liked: 0.5%
Screwy: 0.5%
Sophistication: 0.5%
Awkwardness: 0.5%
Comparing Essays: 0.5%
Apostrophes: < 0.5%
Benefit/ Need: < 0.5%
Body Paragraphs: < 0.5%
Bothered: < 0.5%
Capitalization: < 0.5%
Choppiness of Writing: < 0.5%
Coherent/Tied Together: < 0.5%
Comma Splices: < 0.5%
Convince Myself: < 0.5%
Don’t Know Why: < 0.5%
Err on the Side of Caution: < 0.5%
Formulaic: < 0.5%
Hierarchy: < 0.5%
Interesting: < 0.5%
Language Control/Command: < 0.5%
Lists (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Narrative (RQ 7): < 0.5%
On Topic (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Parenthesis: < 0.5%
Personal Experience (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Questions: < 0.5%
Report (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Survival/Struggle of Writer: < 0.5%
Tone: < 0.5%
Training/Norming Sessions (RQ 4): < 0.5%
Voice: < 0.5%
Pair 3
112 Placement Criteria Glossary

The abbreviation “T” refers to the textual definition of each criterion, and the abbreviation “C” refers to the contextual definition of each criterion. The abbreviation “RQ” refers to particular supporting research questions in the study.

**Argument:** T. Essays contain good and/or interesting arguments. C. Writers will benefit from instruction in argumentation and counterargumentation in English 112.

**Article/Author/Readings/Source Citations:** T. Essays include effective citations to the article and outside sources. C. Writers need to learn to cite correctly; English 112 teaches citation skills. Writers argue against the article. Writers have training in how to present and respond to a source.

**Audience:** C. Writers may need instruction in audience sensitivity, particularly with respect to tone, in English 112.

**Benefit/Need:** T. Writers need work in organization, argumentation, development, and/or counterargumentation in English 112.

**Can Go/Could Go/Talked Up/Talked Down/Bump It Up:** Evaluators indicate a willingness and/or desire to be talked into English 112 placements.

**Clarity/Readability:** T. Essays contain a clear structure, focus, development, and/or points. Essays are readable though some sentences are unclear. C. Writers have a clear sense of organization.

**Commas:** T. Essays contain comma errors.

**Comparing Essays:** C. Evaluators compare essays to previously scored essays in making placement decisions.

**Counterargument:** T. Essays contain counterarguments. C. Writers may benefit from instruction in argumentation, counterargumentation, and development in English 112.

**Creativity:** T. Essays contain creative ideas.

**Critical Thinking:** C. Writers demonstrate sophisticated or good critical thinking.

**Curricular Exemplars:** C. Writers address curricular exemplars or model essays of the writing program, such as arguing positions and speculating about causes.

**Development/Length:** T. Essays are well-developed, adequately developed, solidly developed, developed in a five-paragraph structure, and/or short. C. Writers may benefit from instruction in argumentation, counterargumentation, and development in English 112.
ESL: C. Essays may have been written by ESL writers.

Essay Structure/Organization/Five Paragraph Structure: T. Essays contain a five-paragraph, good, hierarchical, strong, odd, decent, and/or solid organization and structure. C. Writers need more work in essays organization in English 112.

Focus: T. Essays are focused.

Ideas: T. Essays contain creative, developed, and foregrounded ideas.

Impressive: T. Essay elements, such as counterarguments, paragraphs, and vocabulary, are impressive.

Interesting: T. Essay elements, such as quotes, discussion of options, and details, are interesting.

Introduction/Conclusion: T. Introductions and/or conclusions are nice, good, clever, and/or not melodramatic; they contain basic transitions and/or pronoun shifts.

Language: C. Writers use flowery language and/or demonstrate a love of language.

Melodrama: T. Essays contain or lack melodramatic elements.

Nicely Written/Nice Job: T. Essays are nicely written with a good vocabulary.

Paragraphs: T. The essays’ paragraphs are impressive, weird, and/or well-developed. Paragraphs contain faulty breaks and need further organization. C. Writers present creative examples.

Point of View/Pronoun Shifts: T. Essays contain point of view/pronoun shifts.

Points/Options: T. The essays’ main points are clearly structured, vague, solid, decent, good, and/or well-developed with sources.

Safe: C. Writers seem to utilize safe rhetorical strategies, such as the five-paragraph essay.

Semicolons/End Punctuation: T. Essays contain end punctuation errors. C. Writers know how to use semicolons.

Sentence/Syntax Issues: T. Essays contain sentence variety, complex sentences, embedded sentences, sophisticated sentence structures, unclear sentences, odd sentences, ESL sentences, vague sentence structures, and/or awkward sentences. Essays contain few syntax errors. C. Writers can easily correct sentence errors.
Sophistication: T. Essays contain sophisticated writing, including vocabulary and critical thinking. Some essays lack sophisticated writing and/or organization. C. Writers attempt sophisticated sentence structures.

Spelling: T. Essays contain minor spelling errors.

Support: T. Essays are supported adequately or inadequately.

Thesis: T. Essays address a thesis or need more thesis support.

Tone: T. Essays contain good tone. C. Writers may have an “ax to grind” which influences their tone.

Too Critical/Too Hard: C. Evaluators indicate that they are too critical or too harsh in making placement decisions.

Topic Sentences: T. Essays contain topic sentences.

Transitions: T. The essays’ transitional devices are not sophisticated but implied.

Vocabulary: T. Vocabulary is good, awkward, and/or impressive. C. Writers use vocabulary to impress the audience. Writers possess a creative vocabulary.

Weird/Strange/Odd: T. Essays, paragraphs, and/or comma usage are weird, strange, and/or odd.

Word Choice/Word Usage: T. Essays contain word choice errors, such as improper construction of compound words, or correct word usage.

Writing Ability/Competence of Student: C. Writers attempt complex writing tasks and are competent writers; they would not have trouble in English 112 and would be bored in English 111.
Pair 3
112 Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples

The following “Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples” corresponds to the preceding “Placement Criteria Glossary.” The in vivo examples for each criterion were studied, criterion-by-criterion, and the preceding glossary containing textual and/or contextual definitions of each individual criterion was written. Numbers in parenthesis note the number of times each criterion was invoked overall and according to the following categories: “Borderlines First Time Period,” “Disagreements First Time Period,” “Borderlines Second Time Period,” and “Disagreements Second Time Period.”

Argument (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): I look at the sentences and the argumentative structure

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): good tone and argument structure;
Contextual (1): And so the whole thing with argumentation and development and counterargumentation and everything might be helpful for this person [in 112];

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): she did raise an interesting argument;
Contextual (1): it seems to follow some of the conventions of GSW argumentation in 111 (RQ 8);

Article/Author/Readings/Source Citations (14)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): Cites the reading; She made use of sources; And really interesting quote, too;
Contextual (3): She needs to know how to cite correctly; that’s what 112 does [teaches how to cite correctly]; I hadn’t thought about the sources, and she does use them pretty well even though she doesn’t actually state what they are, she has that sense of at least source, date, with the parenthesis;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): Although I will say that he did use the source reading really well here;
**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (4):** Cite; Then you cite, then you interpret, then you evaluate; Like he would have this point he was making, and then he would bring in the source, and use something; This guy used the source really well I thought;

**Contextual (3):** Like she’s against the article; he [instructor] taught OC in terms of how to cite and integrate sources, and that’s what I saw going on here. Like he would have this point he was making, and then he would bring in the source, and use something. And then what he would do afterwards was to kind of explain. And I was thinking to myself like that kind of follows that; It seemed like she had a lot of training on how to talk about a source and how to respond to a source;

**Audience (4)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**
None

**Disagreements First Time Period**
None

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Contextual (4):** I didn’t know if that was an audience thing and he had an ax to grind and he wanted to throw in something about that, a tone issue; he doesn’t have any sense of audience sensitivity; Do they teach audience in 112?; He should be more sensitive to his audience; But is that something [audience awareness] that could be handled, you think, early in 112?;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**
None

**Benefit/Need (2)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**
None

**Disagreements First Time Period**
None

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Contextual (2):** And so the whole thing with argumentation and development and counterargumentation and everything might be helpful for this person [in 112]; Although she needs work in essay organization, but could that also be covered in 112?;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**
None
Can Go/Could Go/Talked Up/Talked Down/Bump It Up (19)

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Contextual (5):** I can go down as well; I could go with a 112-; I could go with 112; I can bump it up because there’s clear focus; I can bump this up;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

None

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Contextual (7):** I can go with my instinct; I can go with that because that was my first; I can go with 112-; So I might be able to be talked up here; I might be able to be talked up on this; I can get talked down; I could pretty easily go up;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Contextual (7):** I can go with 112-; I can go with the lower; I can go with a lower 112; I could go with a 112- on this; I can be talked into that; I can be talked down; I can bump this up;

**Clarity/Readability (13)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (6):** The main points are clearly structured; Clear focus and strong development; I can bump it up because there’s clear focus; it’s readable; It was interesting to read; She has a sentence in here that I was like I don’t even understand what she’s saying;

**Contextual (1):** I thought she had a clear sense of organization;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (1):** The prose is very readable;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (4):** She did raise clear points for the body paragraphs; Certainly it’s pretty readable; Maybe could have been expressed a little bit better; It’s easy to follow;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (1):** It made sense;

**Commas (3)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

None

**Disagreements First Time Period**

None
Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): I think at times like there would be odd comma or some weird thing going on; not having a comma “for example”; he made the mistake of putting a period here instead of a comma;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Comparing Essays (11)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (2): Just compare that to the other 111s we have; Compare this with the other 111s we have, and I mean this is better;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (8): A lot of the other people we read today don’t have that right; I was thinking if we have this essay in the file with yesterday’s essay, then this might be better than the others; This reminded me of one of the essays that we read when we discussed this; Compared to the others that we’ve read before; This reminded me of one of the essays that we read when we discussed this; And compare this with the other 111s we have, I mean this is really outstanding; if we have this essay in the file with yesterday’s essay, then this might be better than the others; it was kind of shorter than some of the other 112s;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): unlike that one we were looking at earlier;

Counterargument (7)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): She does have a counterargument; she even has a counterargument here;
Contextual (2): The counterargument, I thought was in there; she sets it [idea] up in the introduction and she returns to it [idea] in the counterargument;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): He presented counterarguments; I was pretty impressed with that [counterarguments], too;
Contextual (1): And so the whole thing with argumentation and development and counterargumentation and everything might be helpful for this person [in 112];
Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Creativity (4)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): I just gave him some credit for being pretty creative;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): Very creative; Very creative;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): It was creative idea, and I thought she had some pretty creative ideas in these four paragraphs;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Critical Thinking (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (3): He’s got some critical thinking; it demonstrates critical thinking; There is sophisticated critical thinking involved; Some sophistication and good critical thinking;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Curricular Exemplars (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): Synthesize (RQ 8);

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None
Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (1): Well, she says, “It seems the obvious solution to the problem would be” (RQ 8);

Development/Length (30)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (8): it is developed; Good essay structure though and development; Clear focus and strong development; provides good development of ideas; And it’s pretty adequately developed; It is five paragraph, but it’s so well-written and developed; I thought development is an issue; I don’t what you mean by development;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): I thought it was well-developed; it was pretty well developed;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (15): Development; it was fairly well-developed; it is developed; He developed his points well; I do remember thinking that this was pretty well developed; this is so well-developed; This is really well-developed and organized and has a nice vocabulary; I think I like the vocabulary here and the development; Solid development of ideas; I thought it was well developed; I thought the development was pretty good; It’s pretty well developed; And the development; the development isn’t overly spectacular; He did develop his ideas; Contextual (2): the whole thing with argumentation and development and counterargumentation and everything might be helpful for this person [in 112]; it seemed fairly competently written to me, developed in general;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): I thought it has strong organization and development; the paragraphs were pretty well developed; I’m trying to read through this too because it is a little short;

ESL (1)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): I thought it was ESL or something, I don’t know (RQ 7);

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Essay Structure/Organization/Five Paragraph Structure (29)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): Good essay structure though and development; It’s still a five-paragraph essay; It is five paragraph [essay]; The main points are clearly structured;
Contextual (1): Highly organized, though; I thought she had a clear sense of organization;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): essay structure, as far as the essay structure is concerned; There is a hierarchy, an organization there.

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (16): To be honest, I thought this was one of the best essays I’ve read all summer; It is kind of just a five paragraph essay; It’s not a regular five-paragraph essay though; I thought this was actually a really strong essay; Strong essay; It’s like a five-paragraph essay; it’s 112- because of the essay structure; it is kind of just a five paragraph essay; it seemed like this thing was constructed kind of oddly; My problem is with the structure; it has a decent structure; a good tone and argument structure; I wrote 111+ and then it’s 112- because of the essay structure; Cause I thought there’s solid organization; A couple of these paragraphs could still be organized; organized; The organization;
Contextual (2): Although she needs work in essay organization, but could that also be covered in 112?; She knows how to organize

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): The structure is pretty much decent; I thought it has strong organization and development; he did organize here;
Contextual (1): Because the only thing that I have is that he could use more organization;

Focus (4)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): Clear focus and strong development; I can bump it up because there’s clear focus;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): As far the focus is concerned, do you think it is?; it’s on focus;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Ideas (5)

Borderlines First Time Period
None
Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): this idea that there are different groups of people who have different experiences
with the technology, so that in and of itself, I think suggests; she sets it [idea] up in the
introduction and she returns to it [idea] in the counterargument;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): It was creative idea, and I thought she had some pretty creative ideas in these four
paragraphs; Solid development of ideas; He did develop his ideas;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Impressive (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): I was pretty impressed with that [counterarguments], too; I was really impressed
with this paragraph; I was impressed with [vocabulary], too;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Interesting (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (5): it is kind of interesting; And really interesting quote, too; It was interesting to read;
She does spend two paragraphs on each of these three options, which is interesting; then kind of
go into additional detail, like in each of the subsequent paragraphs because we have that
transition here, “furthermore,” so that was kind of interesting;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): It’s really interesting.

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Introduction/Conclusion (10)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): And we’ve got the “in conclusion”; That’s true, and she has a conclusion here;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): she did tie it up at the end; she sets it [idea] up in the introduction and she returns to it [idea] in the counterargument;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (4): the conclusion is kind of brief; Here at the conclusion she does say that again; The conclusion, I thought, was really good, too; The conclusion does have pronoun shifts through the whole essay;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): The conclusion is good; I thought the introduction was really nice and clever but not in a melodramatic way;

Language (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (3): he loves language. It’s very flowery; It’s [language] very flowery; Because he loves language;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Melodrama (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): It is rather melodramatic;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None
Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): I thought the introduction was really nice and clever but not in a melodramatic way;

Nicely Written/Nice Job (5)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): It’s really just nicely written; It’s nicely written and it has a good vocabulary;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): I think the prose was well written; It was well written actually;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): I thought that this person did a nice job;

Paragraphs (14)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): Like this one paragraph here;
Contextual (2): She does spend two paragraphs on each of these three options, which is interesting, because we’ve got the first option here, second option here, and third one here. So her strategy was, I think, to introduce; And then kind of go into additional detail, like in each of the subsequent paragraphs because we have that transition here, “furthermore,” so that was kind of interesting;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (6): we are talking about a paragraph, right, or at least one of the things I was hung up on--a paragraph break; A couple of these paragraphs could still be organized; And I just loved this paragraph here where he talks about; I was really impressed with this paragraph; For some reason, paragraph three seemed odd to me, too; second paragraph was a little bit weird;
Contextual (1): I thought she had some pretty creative ideas in these four paragraphs;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): it’s four paragraphs, but I thought that the paragraphs were pretty well developed; then he has another paragraph that says that when parents do this, the children; So this is an extension of this paragraph or of the last sentence;
Contextual (1): “Look. I’m going to give you an example here,” and she decided to switch that off as a second paragraph;
Point of View/Pronoun Shifts (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): Like everything was I, I, I, but that might have been nitpicking a little bit;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): The conclusion does have pronoun shifts through the whole essay;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): There was a little pronoun shift here, but considering what you said, in the whole essay;

Points/Options (17)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (6): The main points are clearly structured; And it seems that she does support most of her, all of her main points; I think that sometimes some of the points were real vague; Emphasize some of the points?; she raised three options and the second option could be more supported; She does spend two paragraphs on each of these three options, which is interesting, because we’ve got the first option here, second option here, and third one here. So her strategy was, I think, to introduce;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (9): I admit that she could have used more points to support her thesis though; I just thought that the second point is a little bit off; He developed his points well; She did raise clear points for the body paragraphs; She did raise clear points for the body paragraphs; She did raise some good points; She raised good points; she raised decent points; she did raise solid points;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): Like he would have this point he was making, and then he would bring in the source, and use something; he did raise a lot of very good points;

Safe (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None
Borderlines Second Time Period

Contextual (3): It’s safe; It’s a little safe; When you say safe, I think partly why you say that, it is kind of just a five paragraph essay, and the development isn’t overly spectacular;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Semicolons/End Punctuation (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (2): And I don’t know if that’s just because you put a period here; he made the mistake of putting a period here instead of a comma;

Disagreements Second Time Period

Contextual (1): she knows how to use a semicolon;

Sentence/Syntax Issues (31)

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (7): she does have a variety of sentence structures; I was a little concerned about the sentence level; long sentence embedding; attempts sophisticated sentence structures; The sentences seem strong; I thought she was a little vague, but when I look at the sentences and the argumentative structure; the sentences are so good and the vocabulary was pretty good; She has a sentence in here that I was like I don’t even understand what she’s saying;

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (5): But as far as the sentence structure concerns?; There’s no real problem with sentences at all; I didn’t really see any sentence problems; I don’t even remember seeing a sentence where I thought this was awkward or anything like that; there are also a few syntax;

Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (13): there were a lot of fairly complex sentences; I thought that there were enough sentence-level kinds of things that I thought well, maybe not; the sentences were really strong; there are some awkward sentences in this; I got a couple of sentence concerns, but then I thought it was ESL or something, I don’t know (RQ 7); It was this sentence right here; Like that whole sentence throws me off so bad; sentence construction is pretty good; I think I’m being too hard on that one sentence; We might be hung up a little too much [on the sentence]. It is after all one sentence; I just put down in my notes that some of the sentence level issues distract the issues; there were some sentence-level things; Because we have that sentence starting with an “is”;
Contextual (1): There were some sentence-level concerns at times, but I didn’t think they were all that major; weren’t [sentence level] things that could have been fairly easily fixed;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (5): I didn’t really see any sentence level things either; the sentences were pretty well constructed; So this is an extension of this paragraph or of the last sentence; I didn’t really see any sentence level things either; There were some odd sentences;

Sophistication (10)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): This was sophisticated;
Contextual (1): attempts sophisticated sentence structures;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): there’s some sophisticated; I don’t want to say a sophisticated way of organizing this, but it was more than first, second, third;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (5): There’s some sophisticated vocabulary use; There’s no sophisticated writing; There is sophisticated critical thinking involved; Like this one seemed a little more sophisticated to me; Some sophistication and good critical thinking;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): He kind of has this benefit kind of thing that I thought was fairly sophisticated;

Spelling (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): "Ads" is misspelled all the way throughout, but that’s not a big deal; She’s got that spelling of there right. A lot of the other people we read today don’t have that right;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Support (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): And it seems that she does support most of her, all of her main points; Like she raised three options, and the second option could be more supported;
Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): Good supporting details;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Thesis (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): I admit that she could have used more points to support her thesis though; She did address a thesis; she did support her thesis;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Tone (4)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): good tone and argument structure;
Contextual (1): I didn’t know if that was an audience thing and he had an ax to grind and he wanted to throw in something about that, a tone issue;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): The tone was really good;
Contextual (1): her tone is really good, and I thought it was thoughtful;

Too Critical/Too Hard (4)

Borderlines First Time Period
None
Borderlines Second Time Period

Contextual (4): I might be being too critical on just a few points; maybe I’m being too hard; maybe I’m being too hard on him; I think I’m being too hard on that one sentence;

Topic Sentences (11)

Borderlines First Time Period

None

Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (10): she’s got those topic sentences in there;

Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (1): Open with a topic sentence;

Transitions (4)

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (1): we have that transition here, “furthermore,” so that was kind of interesting;

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (3): I don’t want to say a sophisticated way of organizing this, but it was more than first, second, third; The only comment I had here is “maybe more transitions” but now that you mention the progression there, I think it may be implied; The transitions are implied in that I’m going through stages here;

Borderlines Second Time Period

None

Disagreements Second Time Period

None
Vocabulary (15)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): it has really good vocabulary but it seems kind of awkward at times; like the sentences are so good and the vocabulary was pretty good; It’s nicely written and it has a good vocabulary;
Contextual (2): it just seems like she’s just trying to throw in vocabulary just to try and be impressive; I guess I just gave him some credit for being pretty creative and for having a pretty good vocabulary;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): we were talking about vocabulary;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (6): There’s some sophisticated vocabulary use; This is really well-developed and organized and has a nice vocabulary; the vocabulary is pretty strong; I think I like the vocabulary here and the development; This one had some really good vocabulary; I was impressed with [vocabulary], too;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): he had pretty good vocabulary, too; I just thought that the vocabulary was strong; It sounded like she was given the vocabulary to kind of both; coupled with what you were showing in the vocabulary;

Weird/Strange/Odd (12)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): That one was a weird one;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (11): This strange one; That was odd; it seemed like this thing was constructed kind of oddly; I think at times like there would be odd comma or some weird thing going on; paragraph three seemed odd to me; That was weird; Like there were a couple of weird little things; second paragraph was a little bit weird; That is a weird; It’s weird; This is just weird though;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Word Choice/Word Usage (4)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): Like occasionally I would see a word either that should have been one, like here split into two;
Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): she broke up a lot of compound words like “finger tips” and “fast pasted”; She’s always splitting up words that should be together either with a dash. That’s a really minor concern;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): she used words like “quiescence.” And, unlike that one we were looking at earlier, like they’re used right;

Writing Ability/Competence of Student (9)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (4): he might be a good person to be placed in 112; I could see he was attempting some pretty complex things; I didn’t think that person would have trouble; I don’t see this person in 111. I think she will be bored;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (5): My gut says, when I read this, that this person’s probably going to be okay in 112; That’s the question I ask myself: “Is this person going to be okay?”; My gut says, when I read this, that this person’s probably going to be okay in 112; it is very competent; it seemed fairly competently written to me;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
**Pair 3: 112 Frequency Codebooks**

Each codebook contains the frequency that each individual criterion was invoked in placement discussions overall, in borderline discussions, and in discussions during the first half (June 12-June 22) and second half (June 26-July 19) of the Placement Program. Frequencies are meant to be general approximations; all frequencies are rounded up to the nearest half-point; therefore, the frequencies in any given codebook do not total 100%.

**Overall**

Sentence/Syntax Issues: 9%
Essay Structure/Organization/Five Paragraph Structure: 9%
Development/Length: 9%
Can Go/Could Go/Talked Up/Talked Down/Bump It Up: 6%
Points/Options: 5%
Vocabulary: 4.5%
Article/Author/Readings/Source Citations: 4%
Clarity/Readability: 4%
Paragraphs: 4%
Weird/Strange/Odd: 3.5%
Comparing Essays: 3%
Introduction/Conclusion: 3%
Sophistication: 3%
Writing Ability/Competence of Student: 2.5%
Argument: 2%
Counterargument: 2%
Interesting: 2%
Ideas: 1.5%
Nicely Written/Nice Job: 1.5%
Commas: 1%
Critical Thinking: 1%
Creativity: 1%
Audience: 1%
Focus: 1%
Language: 1%
Safe: 1%
Point of View/Pronoun Shifts: 1%
Support: 1%
Semicolons/End Punctuation: 1%
Thesis: 1%
Tone: 1%
Too Critical/Too Hard: 1%
Topic Sentences: 1%
Transitions: 1%
Word Choice/Word Usage: 1%
Benefit/Need: 0.5%
Impressive: 0.5%
Melodrama: 0.5%
Curricular Exemplars (RQ 8): 0.5%
ESL: < 0.5%
Spelling: < 0.5%
Borderlines

Development/Length: 10%
Sentence/Syntax Issues: 9%
Essay Structure/Organization/Five Paragraph Structure: 9%
Points/Options: 6%
Can Go/Could Go/Talked Up/Talked Down/Bump It Up: 5%
Weird/Strange/Odd: 5%
Clarity/Readability: 4.5%
Comparing Essays: 4%
Introduction/Conclusion: 4%
Paragraphs: 4%
Vocabulary: 4%
Writing Ability/Competence of Student: 4%
Article/Author/Readings/Source Citations: 3%
Sophistication: 3%
Audience: 2%
Interesting: 2%
Focus: 1.5%
Nicely Written/Nice Job: 1.5%
Too Critical/Too Hard: 1.5%
Benefit/Need: 1%
Commas: 1%
Argument: 1%
Counterargument: 1%
Creativity: 1%
Critical Thinking: 1%
Ideas: 1%
Safe: 1%
Impressive: 1%
Curricular Exemplars (RQ 8): 1%
Point of View/Pronoun Shifts: 1%
Semicolons/End Punctuation: 1%
Spelling: 1%
Support: 1%
Thesis: 1%
Tone: 1%
Word Choice/Word Usage: 1%
ESL: < 0.5%
Language: < 0.5%
Melodrama: < 0.5%
Topic Sentences: < 0.5%
Transitions: < 0.5%
First Half

Sentence/Syntax Issues: 11%
Development/Length: 9%
Clarity/Readability: 7%
Essay Structure/Organization/Five Paragraph Structure: 6%
Interesting: 5%
Points/Options: 5%
Article/Author/Readings/Source Citations: 5%
Vocabulary: 5%
Can Go/Could Go/Talked Up/Talked Down/Bump It Up: 4.5%
Counterargument: 4%
Writing Ability/Competence of Student: 4%
Transitions: 3.5%
Introduction/Conclusion: 3.5%
Creativity: 3%
Language: 3%
Paragraphs: 3%
Sophistication: 3%
Comparing Essays: 2%
Focus: 2%
Ideas: 2%
Nicely Written/Nice Job: 2%
Curricular Exemplars: 1%
Melodrama: 1%
Point of View/Pronoun Shifts: 1%
Weird/Strange/Odd: 1%
Word Choice/Word Usage: 1%
Argument: < 0.5%
Audience: < 0.5%
Benefit/Need: < 0.5%
Commas: < 0.5%
Critical Thinking: < 0.5%
ESL (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Impressive: < 0.5%
Safe: < 0.5%
Semicolons/End Punctuation: < 0.5%
Spelling: < 0.5%
Support: < 0.5%
Thesis: < 0.5%
Tone: < 0.5%
Too Critical/Too Hard: < 0.5%
Topic Sentences: < 0.5%
Second Half

Essay Structure/Organization/Five Paragraph Structure: 10%
Development/Length: 9%
Sentence/Syntax Issues: 9%
Can Go/Could Go/Talked Up/Talked Down/Bump It Up: 6%
Paragraphs: 5%
Points/Options: 5%
Weird/Strange/Odd: 5%
Article/Author/Readings/Source Citations: 4%
Comparing Essays: 4%
Vocabulary: 4%
Introduction/Conclusion: 3%
Sophistication: 3%
Audience: 2%
Clarity/Readability: 2%
Argument: 2%
Tone: 2%
Writing Ability/Competence of Student: 2%
Too Critical/Too Hard: 2%
Benefit/Need: 1%
Commas: 1%
Counterargument: 1%
Critical Thinking: 1%
Focus: 1%
Ideas: 1%
Impressive: 1%
Word Choice/Word Usage: 1%
Safe: 1%
Nicely Written/Nice Job: 1%
Point of View/Pronoun Shifts: 1%
Semicolons/End Punctuation: 1%
Thesis: 1%
Spelling: 1%
Topic Sentences: 1%
Creativity: 0.5%
Curricular Exemplars: 0.5%
ESL (RQ 7): 0.5%
Support: 0.5%
Melodrama: 0.5%
Interesting: < 0.5%
Language: < 0.5%
Transitions: < 0.5%
Pair 4
110 Placement Criteria Glossary

The abbreviation “T” refers to the textual definition of each criterion, and the abbreviation “C” refers to the contextual definition of each criterion. The abbreviation “RQ” refers to particular supporting research questions in the study.

Argument: T. Essays contain unclear or weird arguments.

Audience Awareness: T. Essays demonstrate or lack audience awareness.

Author/Quotation/Source: T. Essays include quotes; essays do not provide references to the author or introduce sources. Source usage is weird. C. Writers need to work on source incorporation.

Benefit/Help/Need: C. Writers may benefit from extra time and instruction in English 110; writers need assistance with sentence structure and essay structure.

Bother(ed) Me: C. Evaluators are bothered by essays’ lack of development, paragraph breaks, paragraphs, and spelling errors.

Breaks: T. Essays contain poor or no paragraph/sentence breaks. C. Writers demonstrate a lack of awareness of breaks and do not know when to break or understand essay structure.

Capitalization: T. Essays contain capitalization errors or no capitalization. C. Writers need to learn to use capital letters.

Clarity/Readability: T. Essays, sentences, theses, and/or main points are unclear, and/or impossible to follow; essays are not comprehensible for the most part. C. Evaluators understand or do not understand what the writers are doing in their essays.

Coherence: T. Essays lack coherence. C. Writers need English 110 because of their essays’ lack of coherence within paragraphs.

Colon: T. Essays contain colon usage errors.

Comma Usage/Splices: T. Essays contain comma splices, two independent clauses joined by a comma, and comma usage errors.

Comparing Essays: C. Evaluators compare essays to previously scored essays in making placement decisions.

Cool: T. Essays are “cool” or nifty/keen.

Counterargument: T. Essays contain counterarguments.
Crazy: T. Entire essays, capital letters, colon usage, paragraphs, run ons, sentence structure, examples, and/or length are crazy.

Curricular Exemplars: C. Writers address curricular exemplars or model essays of the writing program, such as causes and solutions.

Development/Length: T. Essays are developed, short, undeveloped, underdeveloped, skimpy, thin, and/or tiny. C. Writers are able or unable to develop essays; writers need help with development, such as incorporating sources.

Dyslexia/Learning Disability: C. Essays indicate that writers may have dyslexia or a learning disability.

Err on the Side of Caution/Be Safe/Cautious: C. Evaluators indicate extreme caution in making placement decisions.

Essay/Essay Basics/Essay Structure/Essay Organization: T. Evaluators question whether some responses are essays. Essays contain basic essay structure, incorrect paragraph breaks, lack of focus and essay structure, adequate sentences, and/or lack of unity. C. Writers have some sense of essays structure, need help with basic essay structure, do not understand essay structure and paragraph breaks, and/or need extra time in English 110.

Focus/Off Track/Jumpy: T. Essays lack focus or have weak focus. Essays are jumpy and get off track.

Fragments: T. Essays contain fragments or incomplete sentences.

Homonym: T. Essays contain homonyms, words that are similar phonetically but spelled differently and have different meanings.

Introduction/Conclusion: T. Introductions and/or conclusions are weird, absent, and/or cannot be located in the essays.

Language: T. Essays’ language control and/or language level are good.

Narration (RQ 8): T. Essays include too much narrative, which is not used well.

On Topic/Off Topic (RQ 7): C. Essays are on- or off-topic.

Paragraphs: T. The essays’ paragraphs contain point of view shifts; essays lack unity, topic sentences, coherence, paragraph breaks, and/or audience awareness. C. Writers do not know how to break or focus paragraphs.

Point of View Shifts: T. Essays contain point of view/pronoun shifts among first, second, and third person.
Prompt (RQ 7): C. Essays do not respond to the online writing placement test’s instructions or prompt, or the prompt is unclear.

Repetition: T. Essays contain repetitive elements, such as sentence structures.

Run Ons: T. Essays contain run ons or fused sentences.

Semicolons: T. Essays contain recurring or weird semicolon usage.

Sentence Constructions/Syntax: T. Essays demonstrate sentence-level and syntactical problems and lack variety in sentence structure; essays contain good, confusing, short, impossible to follow, tangled, odd, weird, crazy, ungrammatical, and/or strange sentences. C. Because of structural issues, writers would benefit from extra time in English 110.

Severity/Enough: T. Essays exhibit numerous, serious, and/or patterns of errors/problems. C. Writers have serious writing problems and may benefit from extra time in English 110.

Sophistication: T. Essays are sophisticated or unsophisticated. C. Writers need to work on sophistication and may need extra time in English 110.

Spelling: T. Essays contain spelling errors. C. Writers may have spelling errors due to a learning disability.

Struggle With/Trouble With: C. Evaluators struggle with or have trouble with particular placements.

Subject-Verb Agreement/Verb Tense Shifts/Base Verb: T. Essays contain subject-verb agreement, verb tense, and/or base verb errors.

Support/Examples: T. Essays are unsupported, modestly supported, over supported, and/or weakly supported.

Thesis: T. The essays’ theses are unclear, good, weird, scary, unclear, unfocused, off topic, and/or absent.

Topic Sentences: T. Topic sentences are unclear or absent.

Transitions/Metadiscourse: T. Metadiscourse and/or transitions are nice, weak, bad, and/or absent.

Typos/Typed Too Fast: C. Writers typed their essays too quickly and made typographical errors.

Unity: T. Essays lack paragraph unity.
Weird/Odd/Strange: T. Paragraphs, spelling, theses, introductions, conclusions, punctuation, source use, and/or sentence constructions are weird, odd, and/or strange.

Word Choice/Usage: T. Word choice/usage is awkward and words are missing.

Writing Ability of Student: C. Writers’ essays indicate that they will have problems in English 111, they are struggling or are careless writers, and/or they may struggle with development and sentence breaks.
Pair 4

110 Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples

The following “Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples” corresponds to the preceding “Placement Criteria Glossary.” The in vivo examples for each criterion were studied, criterion-by-criterion, and the preceding glossary containing textual and/or contextual definitions of each individual criterion was written. Numbers in parenthesis note the number of times each criterion was invoked overall and according to the following categories: “110S,” “Borderlines First Time Period,” “Disagreements First Time Period,” “Borderlines Second Time Period,” and “Disagreements Second Time Period.”

Argument (5)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (2): Beginning to argue; he’s answering some weird argument;

Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (2): I don’t know what the argument is; I think it argues a little bit

Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (1): Beginning to argue a little bit;

Audience Awareness (11)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (1): For me, that was a borderline, it was, but his audience seemed weird;

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (7): there was kind of audience awareness, or at least, academic audience; limited audience awareness; Audience awareness; No audience; so there’s an audience problem; There’s no audience awareness, I don’t think; Lots of audience issues, I thought;

Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (1): Audience awareness;

Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (2): Lacks audience awareness in this paragraph; Audience;
Author/Quotation/Source (5)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): The quote in her introduction. What is this quote? Just get a mattress? That wasn’t the big thing, though; There’s no reference to the author, so there’s an audience problem; No introduction of sources;
Contextual (1): Work on incorporating sources;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): It’s obviously not a 112 because there’s a weird use of sources and stuff;

Benefit/Help/Need (12)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (4): So that would help him better prepare; Her sentence level is pretty sophisticated, and I’m wondering if she needs that extra two hours, but I don’t know; So, for me, that’s enough to say he’s going to need some help. 110 with him; I put he needs help with essay basics;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (5): he really needs the sentence structure stuff; needs to work on development; Do you think he’s low enough that he needs the extra time?; I think she needs 110; It seems like she’s been out of school for a while and is gonna need a while longer;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): I really think he needs to be in 110;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (2): For me, he not only needs essay help; He doesn’t really understand essay structure, where breaks are, but also sentence structure issues, which makes me think this is a good candidate for extra time in class;
Bother(ed) Me (5)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (2): What bothered me is that it was broken up like an essay, but it wasn’t really developed very much, which is not a big deal, but down here he’s got; Paragraph four bothered me because the question is what factors contribute to young people feeling overloaded, but he’s got, a fourth of his essay is about adults and African stuff so;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): that [spelling errors] usually doesn’t bother me that much, but there were a lot of them to the point that I kept going like, “Whooo!”;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (2): If this was in a longer piece, it wouldn’t bother me, but I just thought; Paragraph two really bothered me;

Breaks (13)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): Her thesis was pretty good but the breaks, there are none; I mean there’s one which tells me that she knows there should be paragraph breaks at some point, but she doesn’t do it; I wasn’t sure about his breaks either; If it was broken up, it would be as long as everybody else’s;
Contextual (2): My problem with this one is that like there doesn’t seem to be any awareness of when to break things and exactly where he’s going ‘cause it’s “how can they better prepare,” but he’s like, “Many people want to party every day.” And then, “Everyone needs a plan.” So that would help him better prepare; if we told her where it could break and where it could be developed, maybe that would be too much work;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (4): sentence breaks are off; It’s mostly the sentence breaks; I can get over a lot of stuff, but that’s [sentence breaks] going to be a problem; you can’t even just break it;
Contextual (1): Do you want her to break up that big paragraph into pieces?;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): he doesn’t know where to break;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (1): He doesn’t really understand essay structure, where breaks are;
Capitalization (4)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): The capital letters are crazy; How would you feel about a student who used almost no capital letters. All the “I”s are lower cased;
Contextual (1): Learn to use capital letters. That really drove me insane;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): His capitalization was weird;

Clarity/Readability (27)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): But I’m like, if I can’t understand it; It doesn’t make sense; His sentences were confusing; I thought his topic. I couldn’t decide it was. Was it I pods or was it computers?;
Contextual (2): I don’t know where she’s going; Paragraph two is kind of crazy. I see what she’s doing;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (6): I don’t know what they’re doing; I don’t know where her thesis is; The quote in her introduction. What is this quote? Just get a mattress? That wasn’t the big thing, though; Does she ever really say, there are many reasons why. [Reads quickly from essay]. Like she never really says what she’s writing about really; His sentences were impossible to follow; This is one sentence by the way this: “This is true for most college students the parents tend to overcompensate their college lifestyles and it is something that will spoil them on to their students just from personal experience from the countless stories I’ve heard if student works hard for his money they will spend it more wisely but if the money just handed to them they will spend it faster then they can get it the reasons that these students fell into the later part of that statement is because typically comma.” I was like, “Ahhhh!”;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (6): I don’t understand what the point of this essay is; I don’t know what he’s doing; I don’t know what’s going on; I don’t understand what the point of this essay is; But where is the thesis?; But what is the thesis?;
Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (9): For me, it felt like she was all over the place, and like, I kept thinking--“What’s happening in this essay?”; clarity; the thesis is unclear; I don’t know what she’s saying; I don’t know what that means; I don’t know what those are; I saw what she was doing; Are those paragraphs or sentences?; I have a problem with his thesis. Gets off topic and then maybe thesis but the thesis is unclear;

Coherence (4)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): Not so coherent;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): I thought coherence within paragraphs maybe we should stick him back in 110;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): there was no real cohesion;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): Coherence;

Colon (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): Her colon usage was crazy;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): that should really be a colon, but that’s not a huge deal;

Comma Usage/Splices (2)

110S
None
Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): comma usage doesn’t bother me that much;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): Comma splice;

Comparing Essays (5)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (2): See I’ve just begun judging them [essays] by appearance; If it was broken up, it would be as long as everybody else’s;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): Like it’s crazy short, but that’s okay. A lot of them [essays] are;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (2): We did the 110 on the one [essay] that didn’t use “I”s; What made you think it was worse than others [essays]?;

Cool (3)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): When I first looked at it, he was kind of cool, but I think he’s got a lot of structural issues;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (2): It was pretty cool; But this idea that it doesn’t make us creative or not and all of this stuff was really cool;
Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Counterargument (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): There’s some counterargument there;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): He’s got a counterargument;

Crazy (13)

110S
Textual (1): Crazy spellings and run ons;

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): The capital letters are crazy; Her colon usage was crazy; Paragraph two is kind of crazy;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (5): I thought it was just crazy though; Crazy essay; It’s crazy; Her sentence structure was crazy; Crazy crazy run ons;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): Her microwave example was crazy; the essay is crazy thin; Like it’s crazy short, but that’s okay;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): I thought his paragraphs were really crazy;

Curricular Exemplars (3)

110S
None
Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): Paragraph four bothered me because the question is what factors contribute to young people feeling overloaded, but he’s got, a fourth of his essay is about adults and African stuff so (RQ 8);
Contextual (1): tries to speculate about causes (RQ 8);

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): Does she ever really say, there are many reasons why. [Reads quickly from essay]. Like she never really says what she’s writing about really (RQ 8);

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Development/Length (48)

110S
Textual (4): The development’s okay; it’s so short; For so short, I thought there were a lot of errors;

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (14): I put work on development; There’s still part of me that’s like, development is a big issue as far as, you know, they can get that in 111; Development; it wasn’t really developed very much, which is not a big deal; I mean it’s way underdeveloped; It might be too underdeveloped; Great start but needs more development; totally underdeveloped; Structure and development; Her development; Work on structure and development; It’s a very skimpy essay; It’s so short; He should have written more;
Contextual (1): if we told her where it could break and where it could be developed;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (9): I said it was totally underdeveloped; Although it’s really underdeveloped; That with the underdevelopment, I’d probably do a 110; development; Development; it’s underdeveloped; To development; his development is pretty short, too; I mean it’s short;
Contextual (3): Work on incorporating sources, development; Work on sophistication and development; Some sense of structure but needs to work on development;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (10): It’s underdeveloped; the essay is crazy thin; I said it was hardly an essay because it is so darn short; it’s tiny; It’s six lines; Really short; Short; It’s really short; It’s so short; Like it’s crazy short, but that’s okay. A lot of them are;
Contextual (1): he can develop;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (4): It’s way little; It is so short; too short; kind of short;
Contextual (2): Work on development; I said to work on development and sophistication;

Dyslexia/Learning Disability (6)

110S

Contextual (6): This is learning disabled because you know, high school. People right a “g” like that and it looks like an “f,” so I’m thinking this person has some dyslexia; “Respsonbility” It looks almost dyslexic to me; It looks to me like a learning disability in some spots; Are we supposed to tell them if it’s a learning disability?; I’ll put a little note on there, maybe have them look at it just to see if it’s a learning thing; I think it’s a learning disability because of the kinds of spelling errors;

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Err on the Side of Caution/Be Safe/Cautious (5)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period

Contextual (4): We’ll err on the side of caution; we’ll err for caution there; Should we go 110+ to be safe?; Maybe a 110+ to be on the safe side;

Disagreements First Time Period

Contextual (1): I think a 110+ would be a little more on the cautious side;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None


110S
None
Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (13): But this doesn’t even really look like an essay; If you saw sentence stuff, and I saw essay stuff, let’s go 110+; And then I was like, “Is it an essay?” Sort of; My problem with it, again, I was like, is it really an essay?; I guess the language is good, but did you feel like it was an essay?; I mean in some ways I was like, I don’t know if this is an essay; What bothered me is that it was broken up like an essay, but it wasn’t really developed very much, which is not a big deal, but down here he’s got; Paragraph four bothered me because the question is what factors contribute to young people feeling overloaded, but he’s got, a fourth of his essay is about adults and African stuff so (RQ 8); Focus and structure; structure; Structure and development; He had organization problems; his organization is weak;
Contextual (2): I put he needs help with essay basics; Work on structure and development;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (6): he’s got the basics of essays; I think based on this essay; And it was an essay topic; It’s hardly an essay. I mean, it’s close; the essay kind of lacked focus, cause she “first bit of freedom” so “why can people manage” but then it’s like once on campus [inaudible] And then even after college; the essay for me felt like it was all over;
Contextual (2): Some sense of structure; When I first looked at it, he was kind of cool, but I think he’s got a lot of structural issues;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (5): the essay is crazy thin; I said it was hardly an essay because it is so darn short; I don’t understand what the point of this essay is; Like it [essay] has no unity at all to me, but I was tempted to put it in 111 just because sentence level is okay; I think that’s a classic 110 structure;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (5): For me, he not only needs essay help; For me, it felt like she was all over the place, and like, I kept thinking--“What’s happening in this essay?”; Structure; overall structure problems; I didn’t think his structure was that good;
Contextual (1): He doesn’t really understand essay structure, where breaks are, but also sentence structure issues, which makes me think this is a good candidate for extra time in class;

Focus/Off Track/Jumpy (19)

110S
Textual (1): Focus;

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (6): This is kind of interesting but all over the place; Focus and structure; The sentence-level for me was not as much a problem as his focus; He had some focus problems; She’s kind of getting off track; I don’t know where she’s going;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (8): the essay for me felt like it was all over; the essay kind of lacked focus, cause she “first bit of freedom” so “why can people manage” but then it’s like once on campus [inaudible]
And then even after college; The essay itself I thought was good; Crazy essay; Said focus and thesis; No focus; Focus; He’s kind of jumpy;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (1):** Focus;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (3):** There’s a lot of stuff going on here; For me, it felt like she was all over the place, and like, I kept thinking—“What’s happening in this essay?”; No focus;

**Fragments (8)**

110S

**Textual (1):** It’s the one with fragments;

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (2):** So many run ons and fragments; There’s a fragment there;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

None

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (1):** My biggest thing was fragments;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (4):** I saw a lot of fragments; Because you saw the fragments and stuff, too; She had a lot of run ons and fragments; She’s got fragments;

**Homonyms (2)**

110S

**Textual (1):** She would have a lot of homonyms;

**Borderlines First Time Period**

None

**Disagreements First Time Period**

None

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

None

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

None
Introduction/Conclusion (15)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (9): There’s no introduction or conclusion; And there’s no conclusion; It was a lot of stuff in the conclusion; She had a conclusion; There’s no conclusion, which is weird; There’s no conclusion. Doesn’t seem to be an introduction either; See she just kind of ends at nowhere to me; Great start but needs more development; *** had a really weird intro to me;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (4): No introduction of sources; The quote in her introduction. What is this quote? Just get a mattress? That wasn’t the big thing, though; There’s no introduction; Look at the conclusion. It’s nothing about benefits;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): Where’s the conclusion?; there was no introduction really;

Language (6)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): Her language level stuff is good; I guess the language is good; his language control was okay;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): but the language is fine;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): The language control is okay;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): language control;

Narration (2)

110S
None
Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): Half of it is narration (RQ 7); I’m okay with narration if they can use it well (RQ 7);

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

**On Topic/Off Topic (5)**

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): I thought his topic. I couldn’t decide it was. Was it I pods or was it computers? (RQ 7);

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): I was like this one felt off to me; off topic to me kind of; And it was an essay topic (RQ 7);

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): Gets off topic and then maybe thesis but the thesis is unclear (RQ 7);

**Paragraphs (40)**

110S
Textual (1): Her paragraphs were kind of odd;

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (7): There was no paragraph unity; The fourth paragraph was a problem for me; This fourth paragraph seems really weird; Well, it’s kind of like what factors contribute, and then this whole last paragraph is how technology makes people good; “Eating habits” paragraph was out of place, too; he’s talking about communication, kind of gets two of three of the support paragraphs; There’s no topic sentence to tell us what she’s doing with this paragraph;
Contextual (4): I mean there’s one which tells me that she knows there should be paragraph breaks at some point, but she doesn’t do it; Paragraph four bothered me because the question is what factors contribute to young people feeling overloaded, but he’s got, a fourth of his essay is about adults and African stuff so; And it’s all one paragraph, but it shows awareness; Paragraph two is kind of crazy. I see what she’s doing;
Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (9): Look at paragraph two; I thought coherence within paragraphs maybe we should stick him back in 110; Then paragraph three…um….Let’s see; I saw one in paragraph four; Do you want her to break up that big paragraph into pieces?; Paragraph three; Look at this one, paragraph two; I also marked last sentence of paragraph four; Her paragraph unity, I think is a mess;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (4): Like in the first paragraph where he’s got this, he’s talking about it in third person, and the “you” and then “our” in the same sentence; Paragraph one; In the second paragraph; Paragraph three is a mess is all I wrote; That one paragraph;
Contextual (2): She could have grouped them pretty well if she had paragraphs; and also his paragraphs don’t have unity at all like he doesn’t know where to break;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (13): Second paragraph here; Like paragraph one; And then I had down in paragraph three, this one; Lacks audience awareness in this paragraph; His paragraphs were weird; Are those paragraphs or sentences?; Paragraph two really bothered me; Paragraph unity was a big problem; I thought his paragraphs were really crazy; no paragraph unity; Paragraph unity was a big problem; I think her paragraph unity might be…I think maybe a 110+; Paragraph unity;

Point of View Shifts (10)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): Her point of view shifts were weird and so short; She’s got point of view shifts;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): He had a lot of point of view shifts;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): Pronoun shifts?; he’s talking about it in third person, and the “you” and then “our” in the same sentence;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (5): So there’s a “me” to “you”; She’s got some point of view shifts; a lot of point of view shifts; And the point of view. He goes “you,” “we,” “I.” They’re [point of view] all over the place; There are a lot of pronoun shifts;

Prompt (2)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None
Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): It’s not what the prompt asks for at all (RQ 7);

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): Looks like he’s doing the wrong prompt (RQ 7);

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Repetition (5)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): And a little repetitive;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (4): It repeats a lot; sentence-level problems, such as run ons; They weren’t huge. These are run ons; Run-ons;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Run Ons (11)

110S
Crazy spellings and run ons;

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): So many run ons and fragments; There were a lot of run-ons;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (5): Run on right here; I saw some run ons; run ons all over the place; I put run ons; Crazy crazy run ons;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (4): I thought she had run ons; Like here’s run ons; run ons; She had a lot of run ons and fragments;
Semicolons (3)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): Semicolons are recurring; And weird semicolons; Semicolons;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Sentence Constructions/Syntax (72)

110S
Textual (2): just some of her sentence structures; I had sentence level problems;
Contextual (1): She would just kind of start in the middle and then she would have...some of her sentences;

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (18): Sentence level; There was a lot of sentence-level; I had a 110 because a lot of sentence-level problems; The sentence-level for me was not as much a problem as his focus; ‘Cause the sentence-level stuff, when it doesn’t impede...comma usage doesn’t bother me that much; If you saw sentence stuff, and I saw essay stuff, let’s go 110+, I think; there were sentence level problems; his sentence control was really good; Awkward sentence constructions; He had a lot of short sentences; there’s no sentence variety; His sentences were confusing; His sentences were tangly, so maybe a 110 with him; She does have a lot of sentence level stuff; My reason for not doing a 110 was that I kept looking at the sentence level; Her sentence level is pretty sophisticated, and I’m wondering if she needs that extra two hours, but I don’t know;
Contextual (1): it seemed like he was struggling at the sentence level;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (23): Sentence level; I wrote that there were some sentence structure problems; Sentence level problems; sentence breaks are off; It seemed like to me at the sentence level; It’s mostly the sentence breaks; I did see some sentence-level problems, so I could easily push him into 110+; there were sentence-level problems; His sentences were impossible to follow; I also marked last sentence of paragraph four; the sentence tangles; I had sentence-level problems; Where do you see sentence level problems?; It’s just odd [sentence] structures; The first sentence is a run-on; she’s got some weird sentence usage, I think; She’s got some really weird [sentence] structure going on; Mine was sentence-level with ***. Her sentence structure was crazy; There
are a lot of sentence-level problems; you saw sentence-level problems; I had sentence tangles; It’s [sentence tangle] not horrible; Lots of syntax issues;

**Contextual (3):** his sentences were kind of weird to me; he really needs the sentence structure stuff; she’s got the sentence stuff but; I can get over a lot of stuff; but that’s [sentence breaks] going to be a problem;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (7):** There were some sentence-level problems, such as run ons; there were problematic sentence structures, verb tense shifts and weirdness; She’s got a lot of sentence issues going on; His sentence level stuff is good; I was tempted to put it in 111 just because sentence level is okay; he’s talking about it in third person, and the “you” and then “our” in the same sentence; Not being able to use [sentence] constructions correctly here;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (16):** I put strange sentence constructions; I was looking at some sentence tangles; I felt like there were too many sentence errors with it being too short; I said she had a lot of those weird sentence things, I thought; I’m looking for the sentence tangles; So the weird [sentence] constructions; Her [sentence] construction was really off, I thought; Are those paragraphs or sentences?; Sentence-level problems; sentence level problems; there were too many sentence level issues; I was looking to see what other kind of sentence level; They [sentences] weren’t that huge to me though I know that when they [sentences] really jump out; Then I saw these sentences; It’s not a sentence; I had a 110+ because of strange syntax;

**Contextual (1):** also sentence structure issues, which makes me think this is a good candidate for extra time in class;

**Severity/Enough (10)**

**110S**

**Textual (3):** It’s the one with everything; There’s a lot. I think he’s got some pretty serious problems; She was just making these patterns of mistakes that seemed kind of weird to me; For so short, I thought there were a lot of errors;

**Contextual (2):** His problems are huge; I think he’s got some pretty serious problems;

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (1):** I might, and then on top of that, he had like spelling errors, which are so low-level, but with all of the others felt like a big deal to me;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (2):** I don’t see enough; Lots of stuff; I guess it’s worse than I thought;

**Contextual (2):** Do you think it’s enough to do a 110?; Do you think he’s low enough that he needs the extra time?;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

None
Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Sophistication (6)

110S
None
Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): It was not sophisticated in the beginning;
Contextual (1): Her sentence level is pretty sophisticated, and I’m wondering if she needs that extra two hours, but I don’t know;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): Sophistication;
Contextual (1): Work on sophistication and development;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (2): I said he needed transitions and lacked sophistication; I said to work on development and sophistication;

Spelling (9)

110S
Textual (3): I mean there is like weird spelling; Crazy spellings and run ons; But what would be the odds that you would spell lesson “l-e-a-s-o-n” in a row;
Contextual (2): I think it’s a learning disability because of the kinds of spelling errors; But they’re so weird like “life leasons” and “leason.” I mean it’s not she’s just. That’s not a keystroke thing. I mean she thinks she spelled lesson;

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): spelling errors, which are so low-level, but with all of the others felt like a big deal to me;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): My problem was that there were a lot of spelling errors, and that [spelling errors] usually doesn’t bother me that much, but there were a lot of them to the point that I kept going like, “Whooo!”;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): lots of spelling errors; spellings off;
Struggle With/Trouble With (6)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (5): I really struggled with it because I was looking at it; This one I kind of struggled with; let’s go with 110+ because I really struggled with this one; If I had that much trouble, let’s go with a 110+; I had trouble with this one;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): Here’s what troubled me about it;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Subject-Verb Agreement/Verb Tense Shifts/Base Verb (8)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): Subject-verb agreement all over the place; Some of her subject-verb stuff is really weird. It’s like, “Also around older people who surfs the internet are the ones”;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): verb tense shifts; There’s a lot of verb tense shifts;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (4): subject verb agreement problems; subject verb agreement; there were a lot of verb tense shifts; Base verb, base verb, and an ing put in there;

Support/Examples (5)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): It’s not very well-supported; It’s kind of modestly supported; kind of gets two of three of the support paragraphs;
Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): Her microwave example was crazy. There were way too many technologies;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): It was weakly supported;

**Thesis (18)**

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (5): I was never sure where the thesis was; There wasn’t a thesis really; Her thesis was pretty good; The thesis was so weird; That thesis scares me;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (5): I felt like the thesis was not clear; Said focus and thesis; I don’t know where her thesis is; No thesis; The thesis is weird, too: “These four reasons are why I agree with the authors of this article”;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): But where is the thesis?; I don’t think there is a thesis, which is a problem; But what is the thesis?;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (5): That is a weird thesis; I have a problem with his thesis. Gets off topic and then maybe thesis but the thesis is unclear; I guess that’s the thesis? You can’t be good at anything if you don’t?; Help me find the thesis. I don’t think there is a thesis; I don’t understand what the point of this essay is;

**Topic Sentences (2)**

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): There’s no topic sentence to tell us what she’s doing with this paragraph;

Disagreements First Time Period
None
Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): “Parents are continually pushing their kids” would be the topic sentence, right, you think?;

Transitions/Metadiscourse (6)

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): I thought that was a nice transition;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): transitions weren’t bad; weak transitions;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): There’s no metadiscourse;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): I said he needed transitions and lacked sophistication;

Typos/Typed Too Fast

110S
None

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): I was just reading it as typed too fast;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): There were a lot of typos;

Unity (3)

110S
None
Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): Her paragraph unity, I think is a mess;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): his paragraphs don’t have unity at all; Like it [essay] has no unity at all to me, but I was tempted to put it in 111 just because sentence level is okay;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Weird/Odd/Strange (42)

110S
Textual (5): Her paragraphs were kind of odd; I mean there is like weird spelling; She just had weird issues I thought; But they’re so weird like “life leasons” and “leason”; She was just making these patterns of mistakes that seemed kind of weird to me;

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (8): there were weird places; This fourth paragraph seems really weird; And when she does, it’s weird; The thesis was so weird; his audience seemed weird; Her point of view shifts were weird; *** had a really weird intro to me; There’s no conclusion, which is weird;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (18): his sentences were kind of weird to me; I can deal with the weird “petting the dog,” whatever, that was weird; Like this one is weird; This is weird okay; This was really weird. I was like, “What?”; It’s just a weird; it’s kind of weird; he’s answering some weird argument; And weird semicolons; some weird sentence usage; The “old people” is what’s weird; She’s got some really weird [sentence] structure going on; Hers was weird; The thesis is weird, too: “These four reasons are why I agree with the authors of this article”; Some of her subject-verb stuff is really weird. It’s like, “Also around older people who surfs the internet are the ones”; That was weird; It was really weird;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): Weirdness; I guess for me the IM thing was weird, too; It’s like that weird;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (8): I said she had a lot of those weird sentence things, I thought; So the weird [sentence] constructions; His paragraphs were weird; His capitalization was weird; That is a weird thesis; there’s a weird use of sources and stuff; It’s not normal; It’s strange;
Word Choice/Usage (8)

110S
Textual (1): It was just something about the way she worded it;

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): Word choice problems; Word choice; You said word choice;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): So it’s like, there’s missing words, but more than that, I saw one in paragraph four, too; Word choice;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): There are words missing; There’s awkward word usage;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Writing Ability of Student (18)

110S
Contextual (1): I think he’s got some pretty serious problems;

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (5): She’s going to have some problems in 111; I think that [110] would be a good fit for her; He does look like he might have problems in 111; I think he might have some trouble; if we told her where it could break and where it could be developed, maybe that would be too much work;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (5): I think he’d be okay, but they’re going to look at it; She may be able to handle, but I think based on this essay; he was having some trouble; It seems like she’s been out of school for a while and is gonna need a while longer; I can get over a lot of stuff, but that’s [sentence breaks] going to be a problem;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (2): he doesn’t know where to break; I would feel more comfortable putting it in 110. He might be able to do better;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (5): I couldn’t decide if he was careless or just struggling; I think she’s having some trouble; If you’re okay with that. I just felt like he was really struggling; He was on the low end of 111 for me, but he might okay; I think she’s got more than the average;
Pair 4: 110 Frequency Codebooks

Each codebook contains the frequency that each individual criterion was invoked in placement discussions overall, in borderline discussions, and in discussions during the first half (June 12-June 22) and second half (June 26 -July 19) of the Placement Program. Frequencies are meant to be general approximations; all frequencies are rounded up to the nearest half-point; therefore, the frequencies in any given codebook do not total 100%.

Overall

Sentence Constructions/Syntax: 13%
Development/Length: 9%
Weird/Odd/Strange: 8%
Paragaphs: 7%
Clarity/Readability: 5%
Focus/Off Track/Jumpy: 3%
Introduction/Conclusion: 3%
Thesis: 3%
Writing Ability of Student: 3%
Audience Awareness: 2%
Benefit/Help/Need: 2%
Breaks: 2%
Crazy: 2%
Run Ons: 2%
Severity/Enough: 2%
Spelling: 2%
Point of View Shifts: 2%
Fragments: 1.5%
Word Choice/Usage: 1.5%
Subject-Verb Agreement/Verb Tense Shifts/Base Verb: 1.5%
Argument: 1%
Comparing Essays: 1%
Author/Quotation/Source: 1%
Bother(ed) Me: 1%
Dyslexia/Learning Disability: 1%
Err on the Side of Caution/Be Safe/Cautious: 1%
Language: 1%
Sophistication: 1%
Struggle With/Trouble With: 1%
Support/Examples: 1%
Transitions/Metadiscourse: 1%
Repetition: 1%
On Topic/Off Topic (RQ 7): 1%
Unity: 0.5%
Semicolons: 0.5%
Capitalization: 0.5%
Coherence: 0.5%
Cool: 0.5%
Curricular Exemplars (RQ 8): 0.5%
Colon: < 0.5%
Comma Usage/Splices: < 0.5%
Counterargument: < 0.5%
Homonym: < 0.5%
Narration (RQ 8): < 0.5%
Prompt (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Topic Sentences: < 0.5%
Typos/Typed Too Fast: < 0.5%
**Borderlines**

Sentence Constructions/Syntax: 11%
Development/Length: 11%
Paragraphs: 7%
Weird/Odd/Strange: 5%
Clarity/Readability: 5%
Introduction/Conclusion: 4%
Thesis: 3.5%
Focus/Off Track/Jumpy: 3%
Crazy: 3%
Breaks: 3%
Writing Ability of Student: 3%
Struggle With/Trouble With: 2.5%
Word Choice/Usage: 2%
Benefit/Help/Need: 2%
Err on the Side of Caution/Be Safe/Cautious: 2%
Language: 2%
Point of View Shifts: 2%
Repetition: 2%
Support/Examples: 2%
Argument: 1%
Audience Awareness: 1%
Fragments: 1%
Curricular Exemplars (RQ 8): 1%
Transitions/Metadiscourse: 1%
Unity: 1%
Bother(ed) Me: 1%
Capitalization: 1%
Comparing Essays: 1%
Cool: 1%
Narration (RQ 8): 1%
Sophistication: 1%
Subject-Verb Agreement/Verb Tense Shifts/Base Verb: 1%
Run Ons: 1%
Author/Quotation/Source: < 0.5%
Coherence: < 0.5%
Colon: < 0.5%
Comma Usage/Splices: < 0.5%
Counterargument: < 0.5%
Dyslexia/Learning Disability: < 0.5%
Homonym: < 0.5%
On Topic/Off Topic (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Prompt (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Semicolons: < 0.5%
Severity/Enough:  < 0.5%
Spelling:  < 0.5%
Topic Sentences:  < 0.5%
Typos/Typed Too Fast:  < 0.5%
First Half

Sentence Constructions/Syntax: 13%
Development/Length: 8%
Weird/Odd/Strange: 8%
Paragraphs: 6%
Introduction/Conclusion: 4%
Focus/Off Track/Jumpy: 4%
Clarity/Readability: 3.5%
Writing Ability of Student: 3%
Breaks: 3%
Thesis: 3%
Benefit/Help/Need: 2.5%
Audience Awareness: 2%
Run Ons: 2%
Crazy: 2%
Err on the Side of Caution/Be Safe/Cautious: 2%
Struggle With/Trouble With: 1.5%
Severity/Enough: 1.5%
Word Choice/Usage: 1.5%
Author/Quotation/Source: 1%
Capitalization: 1%
Bother(ed) Me: 1%
Language: 1%
Curricular Exemplars: 1%
Support/Examples: 1%
Semicolons: 1%
Sophistication: 1%
On Topic/Off Topic (RQ 7): 1%
Point of View Shifts: 1%
Transitions/Metadiscourse: 1%
Argument: 0.5%
Coherence: 0.5%
Comparing Essays: 0.5%
Spelling: 0.5%
Subject-Verb Agreement/Verb Tense Shifts/Base Verb: 0.5%
Fragments: 0.5%
Narration (RQ 8): 0.5%
Colon: < 0.5%
Comma Usage/Splices: < 0.5%
Cool: < 0.5%
Counterargument: < 0.5%
Dyslexia/Learning Disability: < 0.5%
Homonym: < 0.5%
Prompt (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Repetition: < 0.5%
Topic Sentences: < 0.5%
Typos/Typed Too Fast: < 0.5%
Unity: < 0.5%
Second Half

Sentence Constructions/Syntax: 13%
Paragraphs: 10%
Development/Length: 9%
Clarity/Readability: 8%
 Weird/Odd/Strange: 6%
Point of View Shifts: 4%
Thesis: 4%
Writing Ability of Student: 4%
Subject-Verb Agreement/Verb Tense Shifts/Base Verb: 3%
Fragments: 2.5%
Crazy: 2%
Focus/Off Track/Jumpy: 2%
Repetition: 2%
Run Ons: 2%
Argument: 1.5%
Audience Awareness: 1.5%
Benefit/Help/Need: 1.5%
Comparing Essays: 1.5%
Transitions/Metadiscourse: 1.5%
Coherence: 1%
Bother(ed) Me: 1%
Breaks: 1%
Cool: 1%
Introduction/Conclusion: 1%
Language: 1%
Sophistication: 1%
Spelling: 1%
Support/Examples: 1%
Unity: 1%
Word Choice/Usage: 1%
Author/Quotation/Source: 0.5%
Capitalization: 0.5%
Colon: 0.5%
Comma Usage/Splices: 0.5%
Counterargument: 0.5%
On Topic/Off Topic (RQ 7): 0.5%
Prompt (RQ 7): 0.5%
Struggle With/Trouble With: 0.5%
Topic Sentences: 0.5%
Typos/Typed Too Fast: 0.5%
Curricular Exemplars: < 0.5%
Dyslexia/Learning Disability: < 0.5%
Err on the Side of Caution/Be Safe/Cautious: < 0.5%
Homonym: < 0.5%
Narration (RQ 8): < 0.5%
Semicolons: < 0.5%
Severity/Enough: < 0.5%
110S

Severity/Enough: 16%
Spelling: 16%
Weird/Odd/Strange: 16%
Development/Length: 13%
Sentence Structure/Syntax: 10%
Comma Usage/Splices: 3%
Crazy: 3%
Focus/Off Track/Jumpy: 3%
Fragments: 3%
Homonyms: 3%
Paragraphs: 3%
Run Ons: 3%
Word Choice/Usage: 3%
Writing Ability of Student: 3%
Pair 4
111 Placement Criteria Glossary

The abbreviation “T” refers to the textual definition of each criterion, and the abbreviation “C” refers to the contextual definition of each criterion. The abbreviation “RQ” refers to particular supporting research questions in the study.

Approach: T. Essays contain a good approach or essay strategy.

Argument: T. Essays contain or lack arguments. C. Writers need to work on argumentation.

Article/Author/Sources/Reading/Citations: T. Essays integrate and incorporate source material or do not include source material correctly and/or appropriately. Some author/source/reading references and citations are unclear. C. Writers either use sources well, attempt to cite source, or need help to cite sources.

Audience Awareness: T. Audience awareness is present, lacking, or vague in essays. C. Writers lack audience awareness.

Basics: T. Essays are basic. C. Writers have basic skills, including skills in essay structure.

Benefit/Helps/Need/Extra Time: C. Writers need extra help in either English 110 or English 111. Most writers do not need the extra time in English 110, for their writing needs can be addressed, such as commas, paragraphing, structure, and commas, in English 111.

Bother(ed) Me: C. Evaluators are bothered by essays’ paragraph breaks, use of narrative, thesis, and/or sentence-level issues.

Choppiness of Writing: T. Sentences are repeatedly short and choppy.

Clarity/Readability: T. Essays, theses, and/or paragraphs are difficult to understand, follow, or comprehend.

Cohesion/Coherence: T. Essays demonstrate or lack cohesion.

Comma Usage/Splices: T. Essays contain misused commas and/or comma splices. C. Writers do not need English 110 to address comma issues.

Comparing Essays: C. Evaluators compare essays to previously scored essays in making placement decisions.

Cool: T. Essays contain “cool” or nifty/keen elements, such as transitions, examples, sources, and conclusions.

Could Go: C. Evaluators indicate a willingness and/or desire to go up or down on particular placement decisions.
Counterargument: T. Essays contain counterarguments.

Crazy: T. Entire essays, sentences, introductions, punctuation, paragraphs, capitalization, homonyms, and/or development are crazy.

Creativity: T. Essays are creative.

Curricular Exemplars: C. Writers address curricular exemplars or model essays of the writing program, such as causes and solutions.

Development/Length: T. Essays are developed, undeveloped, short, weakly-developed, well-developed, or not undeveloped. C. Writers need to work to improve development in English 111.

Essay/Essay Structure/Essay Organization/Five Point: T. Essays contain strong, weak, good, basic, and/or loose organization and structure; some essays are organized in a five-paragraph format. C. Writers will learn more about essay and paragraph structure in English 111. Some writers understand appropriate essay structure and appearance.

Fluency: T. Language and/or vocabulary fluency is either good or bad. C. Writers need to work on language fluency.

Focus/Jumps Around/Shifts: T. Essays lack or have focus. The focus often jumps around, shifts, or wanders.

Fragments: T. Essays contain fragments or incomplete sentences.

Fun to Read: C. Essays are fun to read.

Introduction/Conclusion: T. Introductions and/or conclusions are strong, crazy, good, weird, and/or absent. C. Writers could acquire a better understanding of introductions in English 111. Extra instruction in English 110 may not be necessary.

Language Control: T. The essays’ language control and level are okay, developed, unsophisticated, good, strong, and/or great. C. Writers demonstrate a good understanding of language.

Liked: C. Evaluators like various essays elements, such as transitions, conclusions, and/or introductions.

Metadiscourse/Transitions: T. Metadiscourse and/or transitions are absent, unsophisticated, cool, weak, embedded, and/or good or bad. C. Writers need help with transitions.

Narrative/Narration/Personal (RQ 8): T. Essays include narrative and personal experiences for support. C. Writers do not demonstrate proficiency using personal examples in their essays, which excludes them from English 112.
On Topic/Off Topic (RQ 7): C. Essays are on- or off-topic.

Paragraph/Paragraph Breaks: T. The essays’ paragraphs lack support, cohesiveness, breaks, development, and/or focus. Paragraph breaks are also lacking. C. Writers need help with paragraph breaks, development, focus, and structure.

Playing With Language: C. Writers are playing with language and style.

Point of View Shifts/Pronouns: T. Essays contain point of view/pronoun shifts among first, second, and third person.

Prompt (RQ 7): C. Essays do not respond to the online writing placement test’s instructions or prompt.

Punctuation: T. Essays contain punctuation errors.

Repetition: T. Essays contain repetition.

Run Ons/Fused Sentences: T. Essays contain run ons and fused sentences.

Sarcasm/Humor: T. Essays are funny. C. Writers attempt sarcasm or humor.

Semicolon: T. Semicolon use is weird or missing. C. Writers know how to use semicolons.

Sentence Constructions/Sentence Variety/Syntax: T. Essays contain syntax issues, simple sentences, sentence-level problems, unsophisticated sentences, strange sentence constructions, complex sentences, variety of sentences, awkward sentences, solid sentences, tangled sentences, long or short sentences, sentence-level errors, sentence boundary errors, and/or fluent sentences. C. Writers can work on sentence-level issues; writers do not need the extra time in English 110.

Severe Enough/Strong Enough: T. Essays are not sophisticated enough, developed enough, or low enough. C. Evaluators question whether writers demonstrate enough weaknesses in writing to be placed into English 110 or enough writing strengths to be placed into English 112.

Sophistication: T. Essays are sophisticated or lack sophistication. C. Writers need to work on sophistication and may not be ready for English 112.

Spelling: T. Essays contain spelling errors and typos.

Strong/Solid: T. Essays contain strong and solid elements.

Support/Examples: T. Essays contain good and/or well-developed examples.

Thesis: T. The essays’ theses are focused, placed in the introductions, unclear, absent, delayed, and/or on topic. C. Writers need to include thesis statements.
Tone: **T.** Essays contain an interesting or weird tone. **C.** Instructors can help writers correct tone issues.

Typos: **T.** Essays contain typographical errors. **C.** Instructors can help writers learn how to edit typos.

Voice: **T.** Essays contain good, strong, or great academic voice.

Weird: **T.** Introductions, words, paragraphs, colons, sentences, vocabulary, capitalization, tone, and/or homonyms are weird.

Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary: **T.** Word choice, usage, and/or vocabulary are less sophisticated, weird, nice, misused, wrong, and/or not fluent. **C.** Writers attempt to use advanced vocabulary but do so incorrectly.

Writing Ability of Student: **C.** Writers’ essays indicate that they are ready for English 111; they are not or may not be ready for English 112.
Pair 4

111 Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples

The following “Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples” corresponds to the preceding “Placement Criteria Glossary.” The in vivo examples for each criterion were studied, criterion-by-criterion, and the preceding glossary containing textual and/or contextual definitions of each individual criterion was written. Numbers in parenthesis note the number of times each criterion was invoked overall and according to the following categories: “Borderlines First Time Period,” “Disagreements First Time Period,” “Borderlines Second Time Period,” and “Disagreements Second Time Period.”

Approach (7)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): I’m wondering, because her approach to it was kind of, yeah, this is boring, but what are they going to do?; I almost had a 112 because her approach was really good;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (4): I liked his approach. I said he had a good approach, too; I said the approach was weak, but he had the basics; it is kind of a broad approach; his approach was good;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): I thought his approach was good;

Argument (13)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (6): Does she have her argument though?; I don’t really see argument; Argument was good; he’s got one paragraph of support and then an introduction argument; Argument was good; Her argument wasn’t bad either;
Contextual (2): Needs to work on argument; Work on argument;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): Argument;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (3): Beginning to argue; Has some argument; she was kind of flipping in and out of her argument, which is sophisticated if you do it consistently; he needed work on argument more; I just wondered if he needed to work on argument;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (1): Beginning to argue;
Article/Author/Sources/Reading/Citations (24)

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (5):** I think what she’s doing is going back to the article; If she mentioned it from the article it would have helped, but I was like, huh?; Or people in the article; She introduces the source; Her sources are integrated well

**Contextual (8):** she used sources really well; Then she had SparkNotes; She was trying to cite;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (2):** So he should address the authors or try to; No reference to the reading because it asked about authors;

**Contextual (5):** How they kind of address the topics sometimes. It’s like, “Are you on the right reading? Great!; I guess she doesn’t really use any of the sources or anything very well. That’s usually a good indicator; I saw her trying to cite and incorporate sources; she didn’t introduce the source, where it came from, and that was one; she’s going to need some more help with sources, which I mean, I think she’d do better in 111; She used a lot of source material; 112- because starting to work on incorporating sources; But they don’t require that they use the source [for the placement essay];

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (6):** Where is she from? Is she from the article?; And doesn’t really refer to the article; Good source integration; she used good source material; they would introduce sources; The outside sources were interesting;

**Contextual (1):** She needs some work with sources;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (2):** Uses source material well; Incorporation of sources not bad;

**Audience Awareness (15)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (1):** Had some audience issues;

**Contextual (2):** she lacks audience awareness; work on audience awareness;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

None

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (3):** Lacked audience awareness sometimes I thought; I thought audience was a problem; Who exactly is his audience?;

**Contextual (1):** He lacks audience awareness in spots;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (7):** Audience; I think he’s got some audience issues; Audience problems; Audience problems; there’s not huge audience awareness issue; Audience; Her audience awareness was problem;
Contextual (1): I think he’s got some audience issues;

Basics (5)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): Pretty basic introduction?;
Contextual (1): He’s got the basics;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): he had the basics;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (2): I think he’s got the basics; has the basic structure;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Benefit/Helps/Need/Extra Time (16)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (2): I don’t think he necessarily needs the one-on-one level help, I would think; We could point it out to him;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (7): could she get a better understanding of like introductions in 111, or does she need the extra time in 110?; he’d probably be alright; I don’t think she needs to go into 110; I don’t think that he would need that extra two hours to work on sentence stuff; Looking back at the others, I don’t think he’s going to need as much one-on-one; she’s going to need some more help with sources, which I mean, I think she’d do better in 111; He could be sent to the Writing Center;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (3): I don’t think that’s it’s something that’s going to need extra time; I think he’s going to need some help with paragraphing and structure; I think he’s going to need that class [111];

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (4): He wasn’t breaking them up with commas, which I felt like maybe he didn’t need as much work like 110 with that; I think they are still going to need some help with what an essay looks like; I think he needs to work; ‘Cause she’s got some homonym things, but I don’t know that she needs to be in 110;
Bother(ed) Me (7)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (3): Her use of narrative was bothering me a little bit; What bothered me about it was the, cause I thought it might have been a 112 for a minute; And this part bothered me, actually;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (2): Did it bother you that there were no paragraph breaks?; Her thesis bothered me;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (2): That [paragraph] bothered me; It [focus] was what bothered me more than sentence level stuff cause it kind of like;

Choppiness of Writing (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): She almost got choppy;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): It was choppy;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Clarity/Readability (12)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): Unclear thesis; Because he’s got like, an overview paragraph, then he’s got AOL, then he’s got videogames, then he’s got phones and internet, and I’m like, “What are you doing?”;
Contextual (1): She could have been clear, but I think she’d be okay;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (3): I don’t know what the hell that is; Paragraph three is too crazy. I don’t know what’s going on there; I’m not sure what that means;
Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (6): I felt like it was hard to follow; Really hard to follow; I’m like, huh?; I don’t know what’s going on; I don’t understand; What is he talking about?; What do CDs have to do with phones? I was like, “What?”;

Cohesion/Coherence (11)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (6): It doesn’t show cohesion; Coherence; he had a lot of cohesiveness between the paragraphs; Coherence was a problem; That’s the one that I felt like the coherence was off there; Coherence;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): He was coherent and well-developed; Coherence wasn’t too bad;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): Coherence; There’s really no cohesion in general; My biggest thing was coherence;

Comma Usage/Splices (10)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (6): we needs some like commas; Commas; I didn’t use commas; And comma rules; Comma splice; Here’s a run on or comma splice here;
Contextual (1): When I began as a freshman, I didn’t use commas;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): Commas I said; it was mostly commas;
Contextual (1): He wasn’t breaking them up with commas, which I felt like maybe he didn’t need as much work like 110 with that;

Comparing Essays (8)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (2): I felt like her vocabulary was less sophisticated than other people; she’s got to have metadiscourse, but I just think about how many children [students] don’t; For me, I felt like her vocabulary was less sophisticated than other people;
Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (3): I don’t remember her as a standout; But I’m trying to think back to that one we placed today; She was pretty successful compared to a lot of the others;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): Better than most;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (2): I didn’t notice a lot of sentence stuff, I guess compared to some of the others;

Cool (7)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): that’s cool; her transitions were very cool; she's taking this one example and she’s doing it in kind of cool way;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): Alright cool; It’s a cool example;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): Her conclusion is pretty cool; The outside sources were interesting, and that’s cool;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Could Go (9)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (4): I could go with 111-; I could go on that side; I could go either way; We could go;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): I could go maybe to the low end of a 111;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (4): I could maybe go to 111; I could see her in 111; I could go up on this one; we could put it in;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Counterargument (4)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): Does she have a counterargument somewhere?; Some of them did…because I commended a lot of them on counterargument;
Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): He had a counterargument that was nice; Every paragraph had a counterargument; I think it was the counterargument that really made me think like he may be in pretty good;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Crazy (18)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): She had some long fused sentences that were crazy;
Contextual (1): she is being crazy in some places;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (5): I thought it was just crazy though; Crazy essay; It’s crazy; Her sentence structure was crazy; Crazy crazy run ons;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (6): This crazy up here was crazy; His introduction was crazy; His introduction is crazy; he does have some punctuation crazy; Paragraph three is too crazy; the all caps stuff is crazy;
Contextual (1): he’s going to go crazy and start talking about consequences and why things don’t go better and whatnots;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (5): She’s got some weird homonyms, but nothing crazy; But it’s only one, so I was like, “quit being crazy” [concerning word usage]; It wasn’t like this was so crazy, out of control; These are driving me crazy; it was crazy short;

Creativity (4)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): She was on the border for me because she was creative;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): It wasn’t really creative; It is really creative;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): I thought she could be 112 with her creativity, but then it kind of falls apart;
Curricular Exemplars (5)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): He’s starting to evaluate solutions (RQ 8);

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (3): The problem is somewhat addressed (RQ 8); But I guess the fact that the problem is recognized (RQ 8); “Do you feel the problem described by the authors” (RQ 8);

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): Wanders a bit between reasons and consequences (RQ 8);

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Development/Length (60)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (13): Structure and development not bad; Work on development; Cause you just said she needed development mostly?; Development; development was very good as well; I actually said it was really well-developed; Very well developed; her development is pretty good; Development; Her development is pretty weak; Well all her development is here; She had really good development; This paragraph could be separated and developed;
Contextual (7): Development also needs work; Maybe he could just develop them [points]?: Focus and development need work; There were some sentence level problems, but a little work on development would be good; She needs some development; Work on focus and development; Needs to work on development;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (14): Working on development. Teeny tiny paragraphs; This could really be developed; It’s underdeveloped; He was coherent and well-developed; Maybe this part is not so developed; Maybe some parts aren’t so developed; Needs to work on development and focus; His development was good. What about development?; Development wasn’t too bad; Maybe development wise, no; Weak development; I’d be okay with that because it is well-developed; Good development; It’s a little short;
Contextual (6): I said she needed to work a little on development; could work on development; he might need some help with like fleshing it out; He should have taken one of these aspects and expanded on it; He had a clue; I think he can develop enough in 111;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (13): his development was pretty good; very underdeveloped; Underdeveloped; Development; I put that it was well-organized and developed; I saw a lot of sentence-level problems and, well, development; it’s weakly developed clearly; development is a big issue; it’s so little; It’s short; It’s so short; it’s just too short; it’s kind of short;
Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (15): I put her on the low end because of her development and stuff; This is kind of developed but not really; The development looks really good; his development was really weak; Needs more development and breaks; It’s well developed; development wasn’t too bad; Development maybe; Audience and development; The development is not there; It’s short again; it was crazy short; what makes it a 110 beside that it’s short?; It’s just really short; it’s way too small;
Contextual (2): Needs development; Needs development;

Essay/Essay Structure/Essay Organization/Five Point (48)

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (15): it’s a strong essay; It’s weak as an essay; I said well-organized; Good structure and organization; the organization was good; The organization; His structure; I just said that his structure was really good; I mean his structure stuff is fine; Structure; Structure and development not bad; And structure; Structure was very good; Good structure; I have a 110+ based on structure;
Contextual (1): he’ll learn more about the essay in 111;

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (10): It’s an essay obviously; I mean she’s got a pretty easy essay or a thesis there; it’s a really nice essay; what would keep him in the 111 is like how unbalanced the essay is; It’s organized; He’s got the structure because here the way they grew up, money management can be difficult; Her structure; his approach was good and his emphasis in the structure was good; his structure was okay; her sentence structure doesn’t vary very much;
Contextual (1): It felt like she knew what she was doing, and she knew what an essay was;

Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (5): It’s not like one of those one-paragraph chunks that looks like a paragraph but it’s really a whole essay; it’s a five point essay; She had strange sentence structure; she has structure that’s really low; has the basic structure;
Contextual (2): he’s got the essay down; I think he’s going to need some help with paragraphing and structure;

Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (10): his structure was good; I thought the structure and development wasn’t too bad; Good structure; she’s got essay structure down; I thought her structure was very loose to the point of being a problem; I think that the structure is off; she had basic organization; Her organization was good; Good organization and focus; His organization seemed okay;
Contextual (4): she knows what an essay looks like; I mean he’s got what an essay should look like; I think they are still going to need some help with what an essay looks like; she’s got essay structure down;
**Fluency (7)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

Textual (2): Her fluency is not good enough though; I said her fluency wasn’t very good;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

None

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

Textual (3): Lacks fluency at the sentence level in spots; fluency with language is really good; I just think with his language fluency;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

Textual (1): I don’t really see a lot of vocabulary fluency either;

Contextual (1): He does need work on fluency;

**Focus/Jumps Around/Shifts (30)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

Textual (3): Focus; I didn’t see a focus; I wrote down focus;

Contextual (3): She wasn’t focusing on particular technologies. She was just doing computers or all technology. See. [Reads from prompt] “Are the benefits of a particular technology beneficial or harmful overall?” And it seems like she has all kinds of technology; She was focused; Focus and development need work; Work on focus and development;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

Textual (7): Focus; I put focus; I put focus; I put focus; Focus?; Problems with paragraph breaks and focus; That it was kind of jumpy for a 112 placement;

Contextual (2): Needs to work on development and focus (C, CW); Because he’s got like, an overview paragraph, then he’s got AOL, then he’s got videogames, then he’s got phones and internet, and I’m like, “What are you doing?” (C, CW);

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

Textual (4): His focus was pretty good; It was jumpy; Because then like to me this was kind of a jumpl; I just thought it shifted around a little bit;

Contextual (1): Work on focus;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

Textual (10): Good organization and focus; I put down focus; I worried about focus; focus; It needed focus; It [focus] was what bothered me more than sentence level stuff cause it kind of like; He’s just kind of all over; And then there was big jump to video games; Jumps around; I had she wandered in spots but that she had basic organization;
Fragments (11)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): That’s a fragment right there; There’s another fragment that looks like a run on; I had fragments;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): Fragments; There’s a fragment there; I had problems with some of her some phrasing and fragments;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (5): There’s one fragment here; Maybe I was seeing fragments and punctuation; I saw some fragments, but I was thinking I only saw like one; Fragment;

Fun to Read (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): It’s fun to read;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): This is the fun one;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Introduction/Conclusion (35)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (12): she kind of has a conclusion; Cause I thought it was really strong in its introduction and conclusion; I liked her conclusion. I thought she wrapped up really well, and I like what she had going on here; Cause his introduction was weird, but that was okay; he’s got one paragraph of support and then an introduction argument; she does have an introduction; I thought it was a really good introduction; Pretty basic introduction?; I mean she’s got an introduction; The introduction was great; No real introduction; The opening was an issue for me, too;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (5): his conclusion is crazy; I think her thesis is her introduction; She needed an introduction; Do you think it’s [thesis] kind of listed in the introduction?; That’s a good introduction;
Contextual (2): And it seems she knows how to begin an introduction even if there’s a hidden introduction or conclusions; could she get a better understanding of like introductions in 111, or does she need the extra time in 110?

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (11): She needed a conclusion; She doesn’t have a conclusion, but that’s something we can deal with; Conclusion could be better; It needs a conclusion; Her conclusion is pretty cool; His introduction was crazy; His introduction is crazy; I thought it might even be a 112 because her introduction is really good; You know, I said it starts really strong; I said it starts really strong; I said it starts really strong;

Contextual (1): But I thought he kind of warmed up and got better after the introduction;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (4): Although if that’s the conclusion; It’s in the introduction but no where else; I liked the introduction; I think she should have broken this up here where she has a bunch of crap in her introduction;

Language Control (19)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): her language control’s okay; Very well developed, She doesn’t use sophisticated language or sentences;
Contextual (2): good handle on language; She has a really good language grasp I thought;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): I thought her use of language was really strong; I felt like there were language things going on;
Contextual (2): had a good hold on language; I was thinking that they’re not writing in text language all the time that it wouldn’t be everywhere in their world maybe;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (7): Her language was pretty good at the beginning; But a good control of language; His language control is great; It has some language and sentence construction issues that I felt kept it from 112 for me; The language control I thought was okay; His sentence-variety and fluency with language is really good; I just think with his language fluency;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): I thought her language control was pretty good; his language was controlled; I think his language control is okay;

Liked (8)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (5): I liked her voice a lot here; I liked her use of personal and transitions; I liked her conclusion; I like what she had going on here; I really did like hers;
Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (2): I really liked her transitions; I liked his approach;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (1): I liked the introduction;

Narrative/Narration/Personal (5)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): Her use of narrative was bothering me a little bit (RQ 7); I liked her use of personal and transitions (RQ 7);

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): Here she’s done her personal thing (RQ 7);

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): I said she uses a ton of narration (RQ 7);
Contextual (1): He can’t get a handle on his personal example thing, so I don’t think he’s ready to move up to 112;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

On Topic/Off Topic (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): I think he was on topic (RQ 7); How they kind of address the topics sometimes. It’s like, “Are you on the right reading? Great!” (RQ 7);

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): they kind of address the topics sometimes (RQ 7);

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): Paragraph two is on topic and thesis (RQ 7);

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): She gets a little off topic but I think (RQ 7); on topic but off thesis at times (RQ 7);

Paragraphs/Paragraph Breaks (42)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (8): he’s got his thesis, he’s got one paragraph of support and then an introduction argument; I didn’t think he had a lot of cohesiveness between the paragraphs; One paragraph I
said was weird; The fourth paragraph. Is that what freaked you out?; My problem is this paragraph here; It need more paragraph breaks; And these could all be broken up into individual paragraphs; This paragraph could be separated and developed; 

**Contextual (3):** I remember him being really low, and I said he needs more support and more paragraphs; This time error paragraph was weird, but she could probably work that out; She seemed like she kind of packed her paragraphs too much;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (10):** Teeny tiny paragraphs; she had kind of some embedded paragraph transitions; So that would be the first paragraph; he’s got like, an overview paragraph; I thought his paragraphs got away from him sometimes; There are no paragraph breaks; Did it bother you that there were no paragraph breaks? Was that the big thing?; paragraph breaking, but it was strong; Problems with paragraph breaks and focus;

**Contextual (1):** Needs work on paragraph breaks but overall strong;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (10):** Every paragraph had a counterargument; But paragraph two gets way off track; Paragraph two is on topic and thesis; I think that would be fine because her paragraphing was kind of weird, and you know; He needs more paragraphs; She needs more paragraphs; Paragraph three is too crazy; The paragraph breaks are troubling to me, and because this is one that I obviously are breaking; It’s not like one of those one-paragraph chunks that looks like a paragraph but it’s really a whole essay, you know; This one, he knows to break them [paragraphs], but especially the first paragraph;

**Contextual (1):** I think he’s going to need some help with paragraphing and structure;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (9):** The sports paragraph seems out of place but follows thesis; It was two paragraphs about one thing; The internet paragraph is out of place; That [paragraph] bothered me, but I thought her language control was pretty good; This paragraph needs to be gone; His sentences are short and the paragraph was weird to me I thought; That one paragraph; This paragraph seems completely off target for me; This was a good paragraph. It just didn’t transition very well at all;

**Playing with Language (2)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

None

**Disagreements First Time Period**

None

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Contextual (1):** I think he was trying to play around [with language];

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Contextual (1):** Maybe she’s just playing with style;
Point of View Shifts/Pronouns (11)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): He had a couple point of view shifts; There was a point of view shift; lots of vague pronoun references;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): Her point of view shifts; The point of view is crazy;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): the point of view;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (5): Point of view shifts; And then there was a “they” for “you”; there are pronoun shifts; A lot of “they,” “we”; Just pronouns;

Prompt (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (3): It’s just off; But remember we showed one to the them that was off prompt, and they put it in 111 (RQ 7); she didn’t really address the prompt, but that’s not that huge (RQ 7); She didn’t start answering it [prompt] until later (RQ 7);

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (2): he wasn’t really responding to the prompt because there were four technologies (RQ 7); it is kind of a broad approach but considering we put some in 111 that weren’t following the prompt, he’d probably be alright (RQ 7);

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): Sort of off prompt (RQ 7);

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Punctuation (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): some punctuation crazy;
Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): Maybe I was seeing fragments and punctuation; They could have done a period;

Repetition (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): It was repetitive;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): He repeats in spots;

Run Ons/Fused Sentences (9)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (2): She had some long fused sentences that were crazy; There’s another fragment that looks like a run on;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (6): There were some run ons; There were some really clear run ons; A lot of run ons; Run ons; Where did you see run ons?; Here’s a run on or comma splice here;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): It’s got a lot of run ons;

Sarcasm/Humor (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): I thought she was trying to be sarcastic, trying to be funny;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): That was so funny;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Semicolon (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (1): Knows how to use a semicolon;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): I mean that was a weird semicolon; Well, this one should be a semicolon or something;

Sentence Constructions/Sentence Variety/Syntax (84)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (26): She had some syntax issues; his sentence level was okay; they’re all simple sentences, or they’re all treated like simple sentences; Just some of the markers in the sentence made me go; Sentence-level problems; Where did you see sentence-level specifically?; the [sentence level] errors are pretty serious, I think; she has some odd sentence structures; For me it lacked sophistication at the sentence level and the transitions were kind of, first, next; Not necessarily the kiss of death, but I didn’t feel like going on with the sentences; First sentence, “As an incoming freshman, I personally agree with the author of Econ 101”’ on the sentence level, it’s probably not stellar; She had some long fused sentences that were crazy; There were some sentence level problems; sentence-level; I saw some sentence-level problems, but now millions; At the sentence-level, it’s not huge, and it was real borderline for me; Maybe we should do a low 111 ‘cause her sentence level was okay, I think; it was good sentences; I was looking at his sentence level; She doesn’t use sophisticated language or sentences; Strange sentence construction or word use; The first sentence is weird. "Inadequate sleep is among many individuals”; I guess like her use of embedded clauses and her sentence variety; Strange sentence constructions; And I thought this was a weird sentence; I guess I was looking at the sentence level if it should be 110;
Contextual (1): He’s trying to convince me that there’s no way for teenagers to do everything in one day, so he put it all in one long sentence; she probably could work on that [sentence issues];

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (19): Complex sentences and sentence variety; I guess some of these sentences like “so-called IM texts are destroying our children’s ability to see the difference between this new age slang and our formal language”; I didn’t see a lot of sentence level things with her; I was trying to remember her sentence-level variety was really good; His sentences are awkward; There are a lot of sentence-level problems; I thought his sentence-level was good, but clearly it’s not a 112; I saw a lot of sentence-level problems; Where did you see sentence stuff?; I mean that one’s fine, but like, does this sentence make sense to you: “This has a great impact throughout the world because people give information about things they encounter and the good times they have had
which shares greater common knowledge about people and places”; I saw some sentence-level problems; At the sentence level, I mean this one’s a typo; Did you have any thoughts on the sentence level?; Nothing [sentence-level] really jumped out at me; I just didn’t know if his sentence level issues were enough to keep him out; I didn’t really write sentence-level. Like those [sentence-level issues] really jump out at me; I said that it was solid but that her sentence structure doesn’t vary very much; there aren’t a lot of compound sentences; He had some weird [sentence] tangles;

**Contextual (2):** at the sentence-level, I think he’d be okay; I don’t think that he would need that extra two hours to work on sentence stuff;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (16):** Nice long sentences I thought. I thought her sentences were a good variety; I didn’t see tons of the sentence level; the sentence; She had strange sentence structure; She didn’t really have sentence-level stuff; Sentence-level problems; I was just looking at the sentence-level, I thought was held together pretty well; Underdeveloped and has sentence-level errors but has the basic structure; Sentence-level problems; Lacks fluency at the sentence level in spots, so that’s kind of weird; It has some language and sentence construction issues that I felt kept it from 112 for me; there are some sentence boundary issues; I saw a lot of sentence-level problems; I said the sentences were long; His sentence-variety and fluency with language is really good; She knew what she was doing [regarding sentence-level issues];

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (20):** sentence-level problems; I didn’t notice a lot of sentence stuff, I guess compared to some of the others; Because her sentence control is pretty good; I thought sentence-level problems; Her sentence level is pretty under control; it lacked sentence variety and transitions; His sentences are short and the paragraph was weird to me I thought; Did you see a lot of like sentence-level stuff?; I thought the sentence level was okay; Sentence control problems; Sentence structure was problem in places; Because I did see the sentence level is there; Sentence-level problems; the first sentence is not very sophisticated at all; It [focus] was what bothered me more than sentence level stuff cause it kind of like; her sentence level is really good; Sentence-level problems; Is that where you saw sentence level?; Where do you see the sentence-level stuff? I mean I thought it [sentence-level] was great, so; the first sentence;

**Severe Enough/Strong Enough (13)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (2):** It wasn’t sophisticated enough; Didn’t write enough;

**Contextual (3):** do we think it’s weak enough that he needs the two extra hours a week; Her fluency is not good enough though; I don’t know that she has enough issues to be in there [110];

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (3):** Do you think it’s sophisticated enough?; Do you think it’s strong enough for 112?; I just didn’t know if his sentence level issues were enough to keep him out;
Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (2): So, for me, that’s enough to say he’s going to need some help. 110 with him?; Do you think it’s bad enough that he needs to be in 110?

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): Do you think it’s low enough?;
Contextual (2): if it’s bad enough to be 110; Do you think that’s enough to put him in 110 though?;

Sophistication (20)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (10): I don’t know that I remember him standing out to me as like being really sophisticated and strong; I didn’t find it really sophisticated; Not sophisticated; it lacked sophistication at the sentence level; Kind of not sophisticated; It wasn’t sophisticated enough; I felt like her vocabulary was less sophisticated than other people; She doesn’t use sophisticated language or sentences; I saw it lacks sophistication; See I think that’s a sophisticated;
Contextual (1): Work on metadiscourse and sophistication;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): Do you think it’s sophisticated enough?; I might go toward 111 because sophistication for me is usually the marker; I put solid but not sophisticated;
Contextual (1): I said work on sophistication;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): I wasn’t sure if it was sophisticated enough for 112; she was kind of flipping in and out of her argument, which is sophisticated if you do it consistently;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): It needs to be more sophisticated; I wasn’t blown away by her sophistication; the first sentence is not very sophisticated at all;

Spelling (4)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): Spelling;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): Lots of typos and misspellings; “Technologies” is spelled wrong;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): Some spelling;
Strong/Solid (15)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (6): I don’t know that I remember him standing out to me as like being really sophisticated and strong; I said it was really strong; a couple of them were really strong; it’s a strong essay; it was really strong; I think it’s strong;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (6): It’s strong for a 111; It’s solid; I put solid but not sophisticated; I have a 111 solid; I think that it makes it a really solid 111; I said that it was solid;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): I said it starts really strong; So it’s strong;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): it was actually pretty strong;

Support/Examples (15)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (8): good examples; he’s got one paragraph of support; But inside this support, this body paragraph, are a lot of points; Well all her development is here, all her support; she’s taking this one example and she’s doing it in kind of cool way; I said he needs more support and more paragraphs; I said he needs more support and more paragraphs; he’s got one paragraph of support and then an introduction argument;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): It’s a cool example, but to me, I think that it makes it a really solid 111;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): Well-supported; it was real well-supported;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (4): Well-supported; here’s an example; here’s another example; Then you’ve got an example;

Thesis (24)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (5): Here’s his thesis though; he’s got his thesis, he’s got one paragraph of support and then an introduction argument; Her thesis was at the end; It’s on thesis;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (11): I mean she’s got a pretty easy essay or a thesis there; I think her thesis is her introduction; she does have a thesis; I didn’t see a thesis; thesis; Unclear thesis. Do you think it’s
[thesis] kind of listed in the introduction?; Where’s the thesis?; The thesis is not there enough; he’s got the thesis down here; Delayed thesis; Her thesis bothered me;

**Contextual (1):** He could just throw in a thesis, and he would be fine;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (2):** Paragraph two is on topic and thesis; gets off thesis at the end;

**Contextual (1):** Like he’s going to talk to us in the thesis about reasons why things should be better, but then he’s going to go crazy and start talking about consequences and why things don’t go better and whatnots;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (4):** The sports paragraph seems out of place but follows thesis; it was on thesis; she’s with her thesis; I put that it was on topic but off thesis at times;

**Tone**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

None

**Disagreements First Time Period**

None

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (2):** his tone was interesting; he’s got tone issues;

**Contextual (1):** that’s [tone] probably a quick fix…you could talk to him about tone and be like, “Chill out dude”;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (1):** Her tone is kind of weird;

**Transitions/Metadiscourse (34)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (9):** There’s no metadiscourse; She doesn’t have metadiscourse at all; For me it lacked sophistication at the sentence level and the transitions were kind of, first, next; No transitions; The transitions; they’re really good transitions between; her transitions were very cool; She had kind of weak transitions; I liked her use of personal and transitions;

**Contextual (4):** I thought her metadiscourse was kind of lacking; Work on metadiscourse and sophistication; she’s got to have metadiscourse, but I just think about how many children don’t; I wonder if that's [metadiscourse] something she would explore in 111;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (6):** There wasn’t much metadiscourse that I saw; I think without the metadiscourse, I’d be more comfortable with 111+; I really liked her transitions; she had kind of some embedded paragraph transitions; it was problems with transitions; Her transitions weren’t too bad;

**Contextual (1):** I thought that she needs some help with transitions;
Borderlines Second Time Period
**Textual (6):** but there was no metadiscourse in between; She does need metadiscourse; She just needs some metadiscourse; Lacks metadiscourse; Good transitions in spots; I thought his transitions were good;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**
**Textual (8):** I don’t know if there’s enough metadiscourse; I said she had very basic transitions; I thought it was actually pretty strong but it lacked sentence variety and transitions; I didn’t see transitions between them; It just didn’t transition very well at all; He lacked good transitions; the transitions weren’t that great; Maybe it’s just the way she’s transitioning;

**Typos (11)**

Borderlines First Time Period
None

**Disagreements First Time Period**
**Textual (3):** I’m sure that’s a typo; That’s a typo, yeah; At the sentence level, I mean this one’s a typo. This is weird;

Borderlines Second Time Period
**Textual (4):** Lots of typos and misspellings; there are a lot of typos; There’s a typo; I guess it’s just typos;
**Contextual (1):** I don’t think typos are a big deal because we can tell them to edit;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**
**Textual (2):** Maybe it’s just typos; a few typos, maybe;
**Contextual (1):** That’s a typing thing, don’t you think;

**Voice (5)**

Borderlines First Time Period
**Textual (2):** I thought that was the voice; I liked her voice a lot here;

**Disagreements First Time Period**
**Textual (2):** She does have a good voice; I thought he had a strong academic voice. He used “one” instead of “you”;

Borderlines Second Time Period
**Textual (1):** I said she had a really great voice;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**
None
Weird (21)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (10): Cause his introduction was weird; Insignificant was kind of a weird word here, too; One paragraph I said was weird; This time error paragraph was weird; He had those weird colon things; It’s kind of weird; It was so weird; The first sentence is weird; Was it just vocabulary weirdness?; And I thought this was a weird sentence;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (5): He had some weird [sentence] tangles; That’s really weird; I don’t know if it’s this one, using a really weird word at the end; This is weird; She had this weird “which” thing going on;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (8): That was weird; This was weird; That was weird; That one was weird; And that’s kind of weird; her paragraphing was kind of weird; Lacks fluency at the sentence level in spots, so that’s kind of weird; I’m wondering with the caps and stuff are just kind of weird;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (8): I guess it was just kind of weird. It was two paragraphs about one thing, and one little sports thing tacked on it; She’s got some weird homonyms; I mean that was a weird semicolon; His sentences are short and the paragraph was weird to me I thought; It was weird; This was weird; Is that the only one that’s so weird?’; Like this one was weird; This was weird; Her tone is kind of weird;

Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary (18)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (5): The vocabulary is what got me on this one; For me, I felt like her vocabulary was less sophisticated than other people; Was it just vocabulary weirdness?; Insignificant was kind of a weird word here, too; Strange sentence construction or word use;
Contextual (3): She tried to use big words, but she uses them incorrectly; Something about existent; She’s trying to use these big words, which she probably shouldn’t, but you know;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (5): Some vocabulary words were nice; There were a lot of misused words; using a really weird word at the end; Some vocabulary words were nice;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): Some vocabulary; He uses the word wrong;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): I don’t really see a lot of vocabulary fluency either; The use of the word “inhibit” is wrong;
Contextual (1): But it’s only one, so I was like, “quit being crazy” [concerning word usage];
Writing Ability of Student (16)

**Borderlines First Time Period**  
**Contextual (3):** He’ll be fine in 111; Do you think he’d be okay in there?; She’d probably be okay on the low end of 111;

**Disagreements First Time Period**  
**Contextual (5):** She could have been clear, but I think she’d be okay; He’s going to do fine in 111; I think she’d do better in 111; at the sentence-level, I think he’d be okay; It felt like she knew what she was doing, and she knew what an essay was;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**  
**Contextual (3):** I don’t think he’s ready to move up to 112; I think he would be okay in 111; I just didn’t now if she was high enough to go to 112;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**  
**Contextual (5):** I thought she could be 112 with her creativity, but then it kind of falls apart; He’s got work to do; I don’t think they’re ready for 112; We’ll put her in 111 low because she does have some issues going on there; if she could do this really slick, she would be in 112;
Pair 4: 111 Frequency Codebooks

Each codebook contains the frequency that each individual criterion was invoked in placement discussions overall, in borderline discussions, and in discussions during the first half (June 12-June 22) and second half (June 26-July 19) of the Placement Program. Frequencies are meant to be general approximations; all frequencies are rounded up to the nearest half-point; therefore, the frequencies in any given codebook do not total 100%.

Overall

Focus/Jumps Sentence Constructions/Sentence Variety/Syntax: 11%
Development/Length: 8%
Essay/Essay Structure/Essay Organization/Five Point: 6%
Paragraph/Paragraph Breaks: 5.5%
Introduction/Conclusion: 4.5%
Transitions/Metadiscourse: 4.5%
Around/Shifting: 4%
Article/Author/Sources/Reading/Citations: 3%
Sophistication: 3%
Thesis: 3%
Weird: 3%
Language Control: 2.5%
Argument: 2%
Audience Awareness: 2%
Benefit/Helps/Need/Extra Time: 2%
Crazy: 2%
Strong/Solid: 2%
Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary: 2%
Writing Ability of Student: 2%
Support/Examples: 2%
Severe Enough/Strong Enough: 2%
Typos: 1.5%
Clarity/Readability: 1.5%
Cohesion/Coherence: 1.5%
Fragments: 1.5%
Point of View Shifts/Pronouns: 1.5%
Liked: 1%
Comparing Essays: 1%
Approach: 1%
Bother(ed) Me: 1%
Comma Usage/Splices: 1%
Cool: 1%
Could Go: 1%
Fluency: 1%
Prompt (RQ 7): 1%
Run Ons/Fused Sentences: 1%
Voice: 0.5%
Tone: 0.5%
Basics: 0.5%
Counterargument: 0.5%
Creativity: 0.5%
Curricular Exemplars (RQ 7): 0.5%
Narrative/Narration/Personal (RQ 8): 0.5%
On Topic/Off Topic (RQ 7): 0.5%
Spelling: 0.5%
Choppiness of Writing: < 0.5%
Fun to Read: < 0.5%
Punctuation: < 0.5%
Repetition: < 0.5%
Playing With Language: < 0.5%
Sarcasm/Humor: < 0.5%
Semicolon: < 0.5%
Borderlines

Sentence Constructions/Sentence Variety/Syntax: 10%
Development/Length: 8%
Introduction/Conclusion: 6%
Paragraph/Paragraph Breaks: 5%
Article/Author/Sources/Reading/Citations: 5%
Essay/Essay Structure/Essay Organization/Five Point: 5%
Transitions/Metadiscourse: 4.5%
Weird: 4%
Language Control: 3%
Argument: 3%
Sophistication: 3%
Focus/Jumps Around/Shifts: 2.5%
Audience Awareness: 2%
Comma Usage/Splices: 2%
Could Go: 2%
Crazy: 2%
Run Ons/Fused Sentences: 2%
Strong/Solid: 2%
Thesis: 2%
Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary: 2%
Cohesion/Coherence: 1.5%
Writing Ability of Student: 1.5%
Benefit/Helps/Need/Extra Time: 1%
Bother(ed) Me: 1%
Basics: 1%
Clarity/Readability: 1%
Cool: 1%
Counterargument: 1%
Fluency: 1%
Fragments: 1%
Liked: 1%
Narrative/Narration/Personal (RQ 8): 1%
On Topic/Off Topic (RQ 7): 1%
Point of View Shifts/Pronouns: 1%
Prompt (RQ 7): 1%
Severe Enough/Strong Enough: 1%
Support/Examples: 1%
Tone: 1%
Typos: 1%
Voice: 1%
Spelling: 0.5%
Approach: 0.5%
Comparing Essays: 0.5%
Sarcasm/Humor: 0.5%
Curricular Exemplars (RQ 7): 0.5%
Choppiness of Writing: < 0.5%
Creativity: < 0.5%
Fun to Read: < 0.5%
Punctuation: < 0.5%
Playing With Language: < 0.5%
Repetition: < 0.5%
Semicolon: < 0.5%
First Half

Sentence Constructions/Sentence Variety/Syntax: 11%
Development/Length: 9%
Essay/Essay Structure/Essay Organization/Five Point: 6%
Paragraph/Paragraph Breaks: 5%
Article/Author/Sources/Reading/Citations: 4.5%
Transitions/Metadiscourse: 4.5%
Thesis: 4%
Introduction/Conclusion: 4%
Weird: 3.5%
Sophistication: 3.5%
Focus/Jumps Around/Shifts: 3%
Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary: 3%
Strong/Solid: 3%
Writing Ability of Student: 2%
Cohesion/Coherence: 2%
Language Control: 2%
Audience Benefit/Helps/Need/Extra Time: 2%
Argument: 2%
Support/Examples: 2%
Severe Enough/Strong Enough: 2%
Crazy: 1.5%
Liked: 1.5%
Approach: 1%
Awareness: 1%
Basics: 1%
Bother(ed) Me: 1%
Clarity/Readability: 1%
Comparing Essays: 1%
Cool: 1%
Could Go: 1%
Creativity: 1%
Curricular Exemplars (RQ 7): 1%
Point of View Shifts/Pronouns: 1%
Narrative/Narration/Personal (RQ 8): 1%
Fragments: 1%
Typos: 1%
Prompt (RQ 7): 1%
Voice: 1%
On Topic/Off Topic (RQ 7): 1%
Counterargument: 0.5%
Fluency: 0.5%
Run Ons/Fused Sentences: 0.5%
Choppiness of Writing: < 0.5%
Comma Usage/Splices: < 0.5%
Fun to Read: < 0.5%
Playing With Language: < 0.5%
Punctuation: < 0.5%
Repetition: < 0.5%
Sarcasm/Humor: < 0.5%
Semicolon: < 0.5%
Spelling: < 0.5%
Tone: < 0.5%
Second Half

Sentence Constructions/Sentence Variety/Syntax: 11%
Development/Length: 9%
Essay/Essay Structure/Essay Organization/Five Point: 6%
Paragraph/Paragraph Breaks: 6%
Weird: 5%
Focus/Jumps Around/Shifts: 4.5%
Introduction/Conclusion: 4.5%
Audience Awareness: 4%
Crazy: 4%
Transitions/Metadiscourse: 4%
Article/Author/Sources/Reading/Citations: 3%
Comma Usage/Splices: 3%
Language Control: 3%
Clarity/Readability: 2.5%
Writing Ability of Student: 2.5%
Typos: 2.5%
Support/Examples: 2%
Thesis: 2%
Benefit/Helps/Need/Extra Time: 2%
Point of View Shifts/Pronouns: 2%
Run Ons/Fused Sentences: 2%
Fluency: 1.5%
Fragments: 1.5%
Severe Enough/Strong Enough: 1.5%
Sophistication: 1.5%
Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary: 1.5%
Tone: 1%
Argument: 1%
Bother(ed) Me: 1%
Basics: 1%
Comparing Essays: 1%
Cohesion/Coherence: 1%
Cool: 1%
Could Go: 1%
On Topic/Off Topic (RQ 7): 1%
Narrative/Narration/Personal (RQ 8): 1%
Punctuation: 1%
Playing With Language: 1%
Spelling: 1%
Strong/Solid: 1%
Counterargument: 0.5%
Approach: < 0.5%
Choppiness of Writing: < 0.5%
Creativity: < 0.5%
Curricular Exemplars: < 0.5%
Fun to Read: < 0.5%
Liked: < 0.5%
Repetition: < 0.5%
Prompt (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Sarcasm/Humor: < 0.5%
Semicolon: < 0.5%
Voice: < 0.5%
Pair 4
112 Placement Criteria Glossary

The abbreviation “T” refers to the textual definition of each criterion, and the abbreviation “C” refers to the contextual definition of each criterion. The abbreviation “RQ” refers to particular supporting research questions in the study.

Approach: T. Essays contain a sophisticated approach or strategy.

Argument: T. Essays contain arguments. C. Writers are beginning to argue.

Article/Author/Source/Quotations/References: T. Essays contain good, weak, interesting, great, and/or nice integration of sources. C. English 112 instructors will assist writers with source integration; good source use is a marker of English 112.

Audience Awareness: T. Audience awareness is lacking, confusing, and/or good. C. Writers do not provide enough contexts for the audience or reader.

Bother(ed) Me: C. Evaluators are bothered by essays’ weak source use and reasoning.

Can/Could Do/Go: C. Evaluators indicate a willingness and/or desire to go higher or lower on particular placement decisions.

Coherence: T. Essays are coherent.

Cool: T. Essays contain “cool” or nifty/keen elements, such as use of personal experience and introductions.

Counterargument: T. Essays contain counterargument or the counterargument is unclear. C. Writers can learn counterargument in English 112.

Creativity: T. Essays contain creative elements, such as introductions and vocabulary.

Curricular Exemplars: C. Writers address curricular exemplars or model essays of the writing program, such as causes and solutions.

Details: T. Essays contain good and real details.

Development/Length: T. Essays and/or paragraphs are well-developed, good, thin, pretty good, lacking, and/or short. C. Writers need to work on developing and lengthening their essays.

Entertaining/Fun/Interesting/Liked: C. Evaluators liked essays and found them to be entertaining, interesting, fun to read, and/or enjoyable.
Essay/Essay Structure/Essay Organization/Five Point: T. Essays contain strong, unsophisticated, good, and/or weird organization and structure; some essays are organized in a five-paragraph format or need improvement.

Focus/Jumps Around/Shifts: T. Essays lack or have focus. The focus jumps around and/or shifts.

Introduction/Conclusion: T. Introductions and/or conclusions are cute and/or sophisticated; they set up or wrap up essays effectively.

Language Control/Playing with Language: T. The essays’ language control is good or nice. C. Writers are playing with and/or having fun with language.

List: C. The writers’ use of lists confuses the reader.

Paragraphs/Paragraph Breaks: T. The essay’s paragraphs are awesome, contain transitions, include weird references, and/or lack unity. Some paragraph breaks are missing.

Personal Experiences: T. Essays contain effective or cool personal experiences. C. Writers draw upon personal experiences for amplification of points.

Point of View Shifts/Pronouns: T. Essays contain point of view/pronoun shifts among first, second, and third person. C. Writers use point of view shifts appropriately.

Prompt (RQ 7): C. Writers disagree with the online writing placement test’s prompt, do not address the prompt, or approach the writing prompt with a sophisticated approach.

Sentence Constructions/Sentence Variety: T. Essays contain sentence-level problems, sentence variety, upper-level sentence structure, long sentences, sophisticated sentences, embedded clauses, and/or good or awesome sentences. C. Writers are playing around with sentence variety. Writers may be able to work out sentence-level problems in English 112.

Slick: T: Essays contain slick or smooth sentences.

Sophistication: T. Essays are sophisticated or lack sophistication with respect to elements such as metadiscourse, sentence structure, transitions, and/or argument. C. Writers need to work on sophistication in English 112.

Strong/Solid: T. Essays contain strong, solid, and/or sophisticated elements, such as points. C. Writers will be solid and strong in English 112.

Support/Examples: T. Essays contain strong, dramatic, excellent, well-developed, good, and/or specific examples and support.

Transitions/Metadiscourse: T. Metadiscourse and/or transitions in essays and among paragraphs are good, nice, weak, good, bad, mechanical, not smooth, and/or not sophisticated.
C. Writers are trying to use transitions in their essays.

**Voice:** T. Essays contain nice or good academic voice.

**Weird:** T. Interpretations, references, clauses, endings, organization, and/or format are weird.

**Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary:** T. Word choice, usage, and/or vocabulary are great, good, pretty good, really good, awkward, and/or strange.

**Writing Ability of Student:** C. Writers’ essays indicate that they are clearly ready for English 112, and they may be bored in English 111. Writers make mistakes because they are trying too hard.
Pair 4
112 Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples

The following “Placement Criteria In Vivo Examples” corresponds to the preceding “Placement Criteria Glossary.” The in vivo examples for each criterion were studied, criterion-by-criterion, and the preceding glossary containing textual and/or contextual definitions of each individual criterion was written. Numbers in parenthesis note the number of times each criterion was invoked overall and according to the following categories: “Borderlines First Time Period,” “Disagreements First Time Period,” “Borderlines Second Time Period,” and “Disagreements Second Time Period.”

Approach (8)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): I thought it was a really sophisticated approach; I liked her approach; I thought she had a pretty sophisticated approach; I thought it was a pretty sophisticated approach;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (4): like her approach is really; I think. I would, ideally, a more sophisticated approach would be to get a rid of that altogether; I thought the approach to the prompt was pretty sophisticated (RQ 7); I kind of like her approach because she’s doing this very like magaziney;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Argument (6)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): Structure and argument are good but could work on sophistication; Argument and sophistication; Argument; Argument is not bad;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): I said the argument’s not bad;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (1): Beginning to argue;
Article/Author/Source/Quotations/References (24)

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (13): Well, it says in the article why sleep matters; Good use of sources but some sentence-level problems; The thing that bothered me about it was the weak source use; Not directly stating why she used that source; I like that she was using some of these sources; She’s using sources pretty well, and she’s presenting them and the stuff with the school or the shows is pretty interesting; She uses the sources in a couple of places; He uses his sources pretty well; Great use of source material; he used the sources pretty well, doesn’t he?; He does agree with the authors; she introduces the quote well; There was a weird reference in paragraph three;

Contextual (2): She was really using the source material well; I guess they would teach her how to use that [source use] more;

Disagreements First Time Period

Textual (2): Her source use and her specific examples is what kind of pushed it over for me; Nice incorporation of sources;

Contextual (4): The use of sources I thought was good; he does a really good job introducing sources; he was interacting really well with the source, which I thought was a marker that he might be [inaudible] to kind of deal with it; He’s like being sophisticated getting into it [regarding sources], I think;

Borderlines Second Time Period

Contextual (1): He’s using sources pretty well, which is a good indicator;

Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (2): if you look at them like her sources are great; incorporating sources were weak

Audience Awareness (7)

Borderlines First Time Period

Textual (2): It’s not really audience awareness; Audience and coherence although very entertaining;

Disagreements First Time Period

None

Borderlines Second Time Period

Textual (2): that’s not good audience awareness; you’re going to list some things, but you don’t follow the order, it kind of confuses the reader;

Disagreements Second Time Period

Textual (2): had really good audience awareness; Audience;

Contextual (1): I don’t think he was providing enough context especially with the M.M.O. or R.P.G. What is that? I kind of know what they are, but it’s like, would other people know?;
Bother(ed) Me (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (2): The thing that bothered me about it was the weak source use; Did that bother you?; See his reasoning is what bothers me;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Can/Could Do/Go (13)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (2): I could go either way on that one; I can go with that one;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (9): I could go that way; We could do 112- do you think?; we could do a minus with her; We could do a 112-; We can push it up to 112; I could do a 112-; I could go that way; We could put her on the low end; We could do 112- do you think;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (2): We could do a minus; I could see a 112-;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Coherence (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): I thought her coherence was really good; They’re [paragraphs] pretty coherent; Audience and coherence although very entertaining;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None
Cool (4)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): That’s kind of cool;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): Well, this is actually kind of cool actually now that I’m looking at it again; This is kind of a really cool;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): I think she does this really cool thing with personal experience, her introduction…then she breaks into “many young adults”…then she breaks into “one of the best things parents can do”;

Counterargument (3)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): Maybe she doesn’t have a counterargument; she’s got the attempt at the counterargument;
Contextual (1): That’s [counterargument] something they can pick up;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): There’s a counterargument;

Creativity (4)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): I thought it was creative; Her introduction was creative; I said very creative, had good vocabulary;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): Creative;
Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Curricular Exemplars (9)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (4): He starts to look at the causes, which was kind of weird (RQ 8); Because what made me think it was strong is that he was deciding if this was a serious problem or not, so to do that he had this structure that said, here’s all the reasons, here’s all the consequences (RQ 8); There were so many [reasons] packed in here. There were a lot of reasons packed in here, which I thought could be unpacked because I though he was kind of squishing everything together. It could have expanded more (RQ 8); Because what made me think it was strong is that he was deciding if this was a serious problem or not, so to do that he had this structure that said, here’s all the reasons, here’s all the consequences (RQ 8);

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (2): good solutions (RQ 8); I think that because he had so many really good factors (RQ 8);

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (2): She’s got parents, colleges, and then high school, and then she’s got a bonus solution (RQ 8); She could work on that [solution] in 111, I think (RQ 8);

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (1): I put speculating about causes good (RQ 8);

Details (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): good details and good language;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): I mean like I thought she was making these statements and using real details;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Development/Length (37)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (13): It was really well-developed; Well-developed; Her paragraphs are really well developed; It’s really well-developed; His development is good; Her development is really good;
Development; Development is really good; Needs more development; I said it was a little thin on development; Her development is pretty good; I think his development is pretty good; What do you mean by development?;

**Contextual (1):** Work on focus and development;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Textual (5):** I mean as far as development, pretty good for the most part; I had that really good development; work on development and transitions; I said it was really well-developed; Do you think it’s well developed?;

**Contextual (3):** he could work more on development; But every level they could work on development; I thought he had really well-developed examples and paragraphs;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Textual (10):** Development; her development is good; It was really well-developed; Her development is pretty good; Development was really good; Her development and structure is really good; Development; I guess with the development being kind of lacking; I’m just worried about development; It’s short;

**Contextual (2):** It could have been more developed maybe; Work on development;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

**Textual (3):** It’s short; work on development; It’s short

**Entertaining/Fun/Interesting/Liked (16)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Contextual (7):** Audience and coherence although very entertaining; Some of this stuff at the end is kind of fun “willy nilly”; she’s presenting them and the stuff with the school or the shows is pretty interesting; I like the beginning; I like the beginning, and I like that he was saying; I liked her approach; I like that she was using some of these sources;

**Disagreements First Time Period**

**Contextual (4):** I really enjoyed this one; I liked his sentence variety; I really liked his voice; I really liked it;

**Borderlines Second Time Period**

**Contextual (5):** I like the personal story (RQ 7); I liked this; I kind of like her approach because she’s doing this very like magaziney; like her approach; I liked it;

**Disagreements Second Time Period**

None

**Essay/Essay Structure/Essay Organization/Five Point (16)**

**Borderlines First Time Period**

**Textual (8):** it was a basic five point but I thought it was pretty strong; I mean it’s a five point thing; Structure and argument are good but could work on sophistication; His structure was
really good; Her structure was really good; Her structure is really good; Good structure and focus; so to do that he had this structure that said, here’s all the reasons, here’s all the consequences;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): Focus and organization;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): Organization; Organization was kind of weird;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (5): had good structure; I’ve got structure and organization of her ideas could be better; good organization; the organization is not bad; I’ve got structure and organization of her ideas could be better;

Focus/Jumps Around/Shifts (8)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): Work on focus; Good structure and focus; Work on focus and development; This was a big jump for me;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): Focus and organization; I don’t see a focus;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): Good focus; I don’t see her shifting;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Introduction/Conclusion (11)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (6): a cute beginning and cute ending; I like the beginning; I like the beginning, and I like that he was saying, “you know what, different people have different.” It’s not, you can’t generalize. I thought it was a really sophisticated approach; I think I saw in the conclusion, there’s a lot of new stuff; The ending was so good; Cause I think she's recapping up here;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): Cause the introduction kind of sets the stage; Her ending was really kind of weird where she was like, “you’re caught between two different songs,” but it was so cute;
Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): introduction and stuff; her introduction; The concluding sentences aren’t bad;

Language Control/Playing with Language (9)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): his language control was really good; Nice language, good handle on the language; good details and good language;
Contextual (1): she’s kind of playing around with language which is nice;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (2): Good control of language; I really think the language level will be okay;
Contextual (2): I think he’s having fun with language; she’s having fun with language; she had a good handle on language;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (1): Her language control is good, and she’s playing around a little;

List (1)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): you’re going to list some things, but you don’t follow the order, it kind of confuses the reader (RQ 7);

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Paragraphs/Paragraph Breaks (10)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (6): I said there were good transitions between paragraphs; Paragraph three was awesome; Her paragraphs are really well developed; There was a weird reference in paragraph three; I said some of her paragraphs struggled with unity; They’re [paragraphs] pretty coherent;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): I thought he had really well-developed examples and paragraphs, for the most part;
Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): These question marks are her paragraph breaks; was it just that it was one [paragraph] chunk; I didn’t know if she could have paragraphs;

Personal Experiences (5)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): here’s the struggle on personal level (RQ 7);

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (1): I like the personal story (RQ 7);

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): Cause I thing she does this really cool thing with personal experience; Then she’s got…where’s her next set of question marks…back to a personal;
Contextual (1): I’m okay with that shift there because I feel like she’s calling on her own experiences and amplifying bigger things (RQ 7)

Point of View Shifts/Pronouns (7)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (1): There was a lot of “you.” There was a shift;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): I think it hurts me with you if there’s point of view shifts, but I think if they use you okay, they’re fine; But it’s “you,” “you,” “you,” “you,” all over;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): That was a shift; You mean the shift to “I”?; Well, there’s “I” and then maybe the first time “me” you know;
Contextual (1): I’m okay with that shift there because I feel like she’s calling on her own experiences and amplifying bigger things (RQ 7);
Prompt (4)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (2): The purpose to disagree with the prompt (RQ 7); So he’s kind of disagreeing with the prompt, which I thought was weird (RQ 7);

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (1): Doesn’t really address the prompt;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): I thought the approach to the prompt was pretty sophisticated;

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Sentence Constructions/Sentence Variety (17)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): Good use of sources but some sentence-level problems; What kind of sentence-level stuff did you see?; Her sentence variety;
Contextual (2): Just kind of playing around with it [sentence variety]; Do you think they [sentence-level problems] could be worked out?;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (4): I thought his sentence structure was really pre-upper level; He kind of starts with a clause; I liked his sentence variety; Long sentences;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (5): sentence-level problems; the sentence structure was pretty sophisticated; The sentence structure. There’s a lot of embedded clauses and things like that; The sentence structure is really good; Sentence structure was awesome;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (3): I was trying to look at the sentence level if there was sophistication there; The concluding sentences aren’t bad; Sophisticated sentence structure;

Slick (2)

Borderlines First Time Period
None

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): To transition, I thought, was totally slick; She’s being slick about it, so you know, she’s got “Sleep is very important in order to function properly. It’s a big problem among American youth";
Borderlines Second Time Period
None

Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Sophistication (26)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (7): I thought it was a really sophisticated approach; Lacks sophistication maybe; Work on sophistication; I thought she had a pretty sophisticated approach; I thought it was a pretty sophisticated approach; But it didn’t feel very sophisticated; Argument and sophistication;
Contextual (3): I said work on sophistication in 112; Structure and argument are good but could work on sophistication; Work on sophistication;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (6): I talked about sophistication and metadiscourse; This is really a sophisticated move where he talks about machines and then he circles back to it, “it’s obvious humans will never run like machines; It lacked in sophistication in spots but was really strong; I think that maybe it’s because she’s being more sophisticated that she’s not saying, “The author says”; And then he’s got from the article [reads article], he’s kind of like using them pretty sophisticatedly; He’s like being sophisticated getting into it [regarding sources], I think;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (5): I mean it’s really, really sophisticated, actually; It’s not real sophisticated; I put that she wasn’t crazy sophisticated; It’s not terribly sophisticated; a more sophisticated approach would be to get a rid of that altogether;
Contextual (1): I thought the approach to the prompt was pretty sophisticated, and the sentence structure was pretty sophisticated (RQ 7);

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (4): It’s not sophisticated; I was trying to look at the sentence level if there was sophistication there; Transitions are kind of not sophisticated; Sophisticated sentence structure;

Strong/Solid (13)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (5): Because what made me think it was strong is that he was deciding if this was a serious problem or not, so to do that he had this structure that said, here’s all the reasons, here’s all the consequences, and here’s the struggle on personal level. I thought it was a pretty sophisticated approach; Cause I was kind of….He’s going to be really solid; he did have really strong examples; I think it’s strong; Really strong and I didn’t really write anything;
Contextual (2): she’s got a really strong handle on it; He’s going to be really solid;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): Solid; It lacked in sophistication in spots but was really strong;
Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): it’s strong enough; But the points are really strong;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (2): I think it’s really really strong; It’s pretty solid though;

Support/Examples (9)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): he did have really strong examples; Her examples are what really; His examples were really dramatic; has excellent support;
Contextual (1): he uses examples pretty well;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (2): I thought he had really well-developed examples; Her source use and her specific examples is what kind of pushed it over for me;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (1): She uses examples really well;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): The examples are really really good;

Transitions/Metadiscourse (17)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (9): I said there were good transitions between paragraphs; I saw the transitions; I thought maybe the transitions need a little bit of work; Nice transitions; there aren’t transitions between the graphs; Her transitions are weak; I thought her transitions were good; his transitions could be better; The transitions were bad;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (3): I talked about sophistication and metadiscourse; I didn’t see the sentence transitions that well, but I think 112 would be okay; To transition, I thought, was totally slick;
Contextual (1): work on development and transitions;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): Her transitions are kind of mechanical; Her transitions weren’t really smooth;
Contextual (1): I mean she’s trying to transition;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): Transitions are kind of not sophisticated;
Voice (7)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (3): He had a lot of voice; Nice voice; she had good academic voice;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): I really liked his voice;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (2): His voice is nice; His voice is great;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): The voice is good;

Weird (9)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (4): Some of her interpretations were kind of weird too; There was a weird reference in paragraph three; he’s kind of disagreeing with the prompt, which I thought was weird; He starts to look at the causes, which was kind of weird;

Disagreements First Time Period
None

Borderlines Second Time Period
Textual (4): The sports thing was weird; Her ending was really kind of weird where she was like, “you’re caught between two different songs,” but it was so cute; Organization was kind of weird; That’s kind of a weird embedded thing;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Textual (1): Weird looking?;

Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary (9)

Borderlines First Time Period
Textual (8): I thought that the vocabulary words were great; Good vocabulary; I thought her vocabulary was pretty good; had good vocabulary; Her vocabulary is really good; Her word choice was what swayed me to the low end of 112; Awkward word choice; The way she used words. She used words strangely, and that really jumped out at me;

Disagreements First Time Period
Textual (1): I thought his word choice was really good, “improper sleeping habits can lead to false symptoms of other ailments,” “sleep deprivation”;

Borderlines Second Time Period
None
Disagreements Second Time Period
None

Writing Ability of Students (22)

Borderlines First Time Period
Contextual (9): I think he could handle a 112-; There’s were some places where he kind of stumbled, but I think he might be bored in 111; he might be ready for a higher level; I think he could be okay. I could see going into 112- with him because I had him on the high end; I think she’d be okay in there; I think she might be good in 112; She’s taking a shot; She would be bored in 111; He’s going to be really solid;

Disagreements First Time Period
Contextual (2): I think she would be really bored in 111; I think she’s in good shape, so we could do a minus with her;

Borderlines Second Time Period
Contextual (8): She could have been clearer; she’s ready to go; he’s probably good; She’s got some good insights; She was trying too hard, and so she did mess up a little bit, but I thought she was good; I think she’d be fine in there [112] especially since we’re being told to be nicer; she’d maybe be okay in 112; she’s ready to go;

Disagreements Second Time Period
Contextual (3): Do you think she would do okay in 112?; I think she’s going to be okay; I think he’s definitely ready to be in 112 though;
**Pair 4: 112 Frequency Codebooks**

Each codebook contains the frequency that each individual criterion was invoked in placement discussions overall, in borderline discussions, and in discussions during the first half (June 12-June 22) and second half (June 26-July 19) of the Placement Program. Frequencies are meant to be general approximations; all frequencies are rounded up to the nearest half-point; therefore, the frequencies in any given codebook do not total 100%.

**Overall**

Development/Length: 11%
Sophistication: 8%
Article/Author/Source/Quotations/References: 7%
Writing Ability of Student: 6%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 5%
Entertaining/Fun/Interesting/Liked: 5%
Essay/Essay Structure/Essay Organization/Five Point: 5%
Sentence Constructions/Sentence Variety: 5%
Can/Could Do/Go: 4%
Strong/Solid: 4%
Introduction/Conclusion: 3%
Language Control/Playing with Language: 3%
Paragraphs/Paragraph Breaks: 3%
Curricular Exemplars (RQ 8): 3%
Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary: 3%
Support/Examples: 3%
Weird: 2.5%
Approach: 2%
Argument: 2%
Voice: 2%
Audience Awareness: 2%
Focus/Jumps Around/Shifts: 2%
Point of View Shifts/Pronouns: 2%
Personal Experiences (RQ 7): 1.5%
Coherence: 1%
Cool: 1%
Counterargument: 1%
Creativity: 1%
Prompt (RQ 7): 1%
Bother(ed) Me: 0.5%
Details: 0.5%
Slick: 0.5%
List (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Borderline

Development/Length: 11%
Article/Author/Source/Quotations/References: 7%
Sophistication: 7%
Writing Ability of Student: 7%
Entertaining/Fun/Interesting/Liked: 5%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 5%
Essay/Essay Structure/Essay Organization/Five Point: 4%
Sentence Constructions/Sentence Variety: 4%
Strong/Solid: 4%
Language Control/Playing with Language: 3.5%
Approach: 3%
Introduction/Conclusion: 3%
Weird: 3%
Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary: 3%
Curricular Exemplars (RQ 8): 2.5%
Focus/Jumps Around/Shifts: 2.5%
Paragraphs/Paragraph Breaks: 2.5%
Support/Examples: 2.5%
Voice: 2%
Argument: 2%
Audience Awareness: 2%
Can/Could Do/Go: 2%
Creativity: 2%
Prompt (RQ 7): 2%
Bother(ed) Me: 1%
Coherence: 1%
Cool: 1%
Counterargument: 1%
Personal Experiences (RQ 7): 1%
Details: 1%
List (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Point of View Shifts/Pronouns: < 0.5%
Slick: < 0.5%
First Half

Development/Length: 10%
Article/Author/Source/Quotations/References: 9%
Sophistication: 7%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 6%
Can/Could Do/Go: 5%
Entertaining/Fun/Interesting/Liked: 5%
Writing Ability of Student: 5%
Sentence Constructions/Sentence Variety: 4%
Essay/Essay Structure/Essay Organization/Five Point: 4%
Strong/Solid: 4%
Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary: 4%
Focus/Jumps Around/Shifts: 3%
Curricular Exemplars (RQ 8): 3%
Introduction/Conclusion: 3%
Paragraphs/Paragraph Breaks: 3%
Support/Examples: 3%
Approach: 2%
Argument: 2%
Language Control/Playing with Language: 2%
Voice: 2%
Weird: 2%
Audience Awareness: 1%
Bother(ed) Me: 1%
Coherence: 1%
Counterargument: 1%
Creativity: 1%
Point of View Shifts/Pronouns: 1%
Prompt (RQ 7): 1%
Slick: 1%
Details: 0.5%
Cool: 0.5%
Personal Experiences (RQ 7): 0.5%
List (RQ 7): < 0.5%
Second Half

Development/Length: 12%
Sophistication: 8%
Writing Ability of Student: 7%
Sentence Constructions/Sentence Variety: 6.5%
Essay/Essay Structure/Essay Organization/Five Point: 6%
Audience Awareness: 4%
Entertaining/Fun/Interesting/Liked: 4%
Introduction/Conclusion: 4%
Language Control/Playing with Language: 4%
Article/Author/Source/Quotations/References: 2.5%
Approach: 3%
Personal Experiences (RQ 7): 3%
Point of View Shifts/Pronouns: 3%
Strong/Solid: 3%
Metadiscourse/Transitions: 3%
Cool: 2.5%
Curricular Exemplars: 2.5%
Paragraphs/Paragraph Breaks: 2.5%
Support/Examples: 2%
Can/Could Do/Go: 2%
Focus/Jumps Around/Shifts: 2%
Voice: 2%
Weird: 2%
Argument: 1%
Counterargument: 1%
Creativity: 1%
Details: 1%
List (RQ 7): 1%
Prompt (RQ 7): 1%
Coherence: < 0.5%
Bother(ed) Me: < 0.5%
Slick: < 0.5%
Word Choice/Usage/Vocabulary: < 0.5%
Number of Discussions

Pair 1

110S: 4
110 Borderlines First Time Period: 26
110 Disagreements First Time Period: 9
110 Borderlines Second Time Period: 22
110 Disagreements Second Time Period: 10
Total: 71

111 Borderlines First Time Period: 26
111 Disagreements First Time Period: 21
111 Borderlines Second Time Period: 26
111 Disagreements Second Time Period: 10
Total: 83

112 Borderlines First Time Period: 9
112 Disagreements First Time Period: 5
112 Borderlines Second Time Period: 7
112 Disagreements Second Time Period: 3
Total: 24

Pair 2

110S: 2
110 Borderlines First Time Period: 26
110 Disagreements First Time Period: 16
110 Borderlines Second Time Period: 9
110 Disagreements Second Time Period: 3
Total: 56

111 Borderlines First Time Period: 21
111 Disagreements First Time Period: 18
111 Borderlines Second Time Period: 33
111 Disagreements Second Time Period: 2
Total: 74

112 Borderlines First Time Period: 18
112 Disagreements First Time Period: 5
112 Borderlines Second Time Period: 10
112 Disagreements Second Time Period: 3
Total: 36
Pair 3

110S: 5
110 Borderlines First Time Period: 18
110 Disagreements First Time Period: 7
110 Borderlines Second Time Period: 10
110 Disagreements Second Time Period: 12
Total: 52

111 Borderlines First Time Period: 28
111 Disagreements First Time Period: 30
111 Borderlines Second Time Period: 26
111 Disagreements Second Time Period: 27
Total: 111

112 Borderlines First Time Period: 9
112 Disagreements First Time Period: 3
112 Borderlines Second Time Period: 17
112 Disagreements Second Time Period: 5
Total: 34

Pair 4

110S: 6
110 Borderlines First Time Period: 20
110 Disagreements First Time Period: 17
110 Borderlines Second Time Period: 11
110 Disagreements Second Time Period: 13
Total: 67

111 Borderlines First Time Period: 31
111 Disagreements First Time Period: 19
111 Borderlines Second Time Period: 25
111 Disagreements Second Time Period: 19
Total: 94

112 Borderlines First Time Period: 19
112 Disagreements First Time Period: 8
112 Borderlines Second Time Period: 14
112 Disagreements Second Time Period: 3
Total: 44
APPENDIX C: SAMPLE PLACEMENT ESSAY PROMPTS

Sample Prompt 1981: Describe and discuss your favorite or least favorite teacher (General Studies Writing Program, 1981, *English Placement Test--Summer*).

Sample Prompt 1985-86: Describe and discuss a person who has influenced your attitudes, your beliefs, your values, or your behavior in some way (General Studies Writing Program, 1985-86, *English Placement Test*).

Sample Prompt 1988: Describe and discuss the most genuinely eccentric (weird or unusual) person you know of (General Studies Writing Program, 1988, *English Placement Test--Summer Preregistration Program*).

Sample Prompt 1999-2000: Describe and discuss an object you or someone else values highly and the object’s significance to its owner (General Studies Writing Program, 1999-2000, *English Placement Test--B.G.S.U. Pre Registration Form*).

Sample Prompt 2000-01: Like nearly everyone else, you’ve probably watched a lot of television—including talk shows, sitcoms, dramatic programs, sports events, soaps, news programs, commercials, infomercials, game shows, and so on. In this essay, please express your personal opinion regarding a specific program, type of program, or commercial; provide reasons to support your opinion; and then offer examples to illustrate your point (General Studies Writing Program, 2000-2001, *English Placement Test--B.G.S.U. Pre Registration Form*).

Sample Prompt 2006-07: In the article “Overloaded?” the authors note that “saddling kids with too many activities may be taxing their young brains” and claim that technology has helped to cause this problem. What do you think could be done to solve the problem of young people feeling overloaded by technology and/or life in general? Write a persuasive essay that suggests ways to solve the problem. Be sure to support your points with examples from what you have read, from what you have heard others say, and/or from your own experiences (General Studies Writing Program, 2006-07, *Placement Test*).
1. A major point in Kim Clark’s article is that most new college students are not prepared for the responsibility of budgeting and managing money. Do you agree that most young adults are seriously unprepared for these responsibilities, or are the authors overstating or exaggerating the problem? Write a persuasive essay that clearly presents your position on the readiness of incoming college students to handle money wisely. Be sure to support your points with examples from what you have read, from what you have heard others say, and/or from your own experiences.

2. If the author of “Econ 101: College is Time to Budget” is correct, most incoming college students are poorly prepared to budget and manage their money wisely—which the author contends is a serious problem with serious consequences. What could be done before they come to college or while they are at college to better prepare these students to handle their money more effectively? Write a persuasive essay in which you propose several solutions to the problem addressed by the author. Be sure to support your points with examples from what you have read, from what you have heard others say, and/or from your own experiences.

3. Clark argues that many new college students cannot manage their money. Why would young adults not be able to manage their money wisely? Write a persuasive essay that speculates about the possible causes that explain why some young adults arrive at college unable to manage or budget their money. Be sure to support your points with examples from what you have read, from what you have heard others say, and/or from your own experiences.

1. In “Why Sleep Matters,” authors Kantrowitz and Springen present opinions from experts who argue that insufficient sleep is unhealthy and might even be deadly. If sleep is so important, and if, as the article suggests, many people spend inadequate time sleeping, why do you think many people don’t (or can’t) get more sleep? Write a persuasive essay that speculates about the causes behind many people’s claim that they don’t (or can’t) get the sleep experts say they need. Be sure to support your points with examples from what you have read, from what you have heard others say, and/or from your own experiences.

2. Kantrowitz and Springen, authors of “Why Sleep Matters,” point out that while some causes of lack of sleep are due to illness, in many other cases, people don’t get the sleep they need because they make lifestyle choices that give greater priority to things other than sleep. What changes might you suggest to busy people to help them find more time
for sleeping, and yet still allow them to accomplish other things they absolutely need to do? Write a persuasive essay that recommends several changes busy people might make in their lives to improve their chances of getting the sleep they need. Be sure to support your points with examples from what you have read, from what you have heard other says, and/or from your own experiences.

3. The authors of “Why Sleep Matters” selected words like “life-threatening” to describe the potential impact of lack of sleep, and offered numerous examples that suggested the problem of inadequate sleep is very common. Do you agree with the authors that the problem is serious and widespread in your group, or does your experience suggest that the problem is less serious and/or less frequent among people in your group? Write a persuasive essay the clearly answers the question, “Is serious lack of sleep as big a problem in your group as the authors claim?” Be sure to support your points with examples of what you have read, from what you have heard others say, and/or from your own experiences.

Database: Academic Search Premier

1. In the article, “Overloaded?” the authors note that young people are adapting to “a diet of overstimulation” because of technology. In your opinion, what factors (technological and others) contribute to young people feeling over stimulated or overloaded? Write a persuasive essay that speculates about several possible causes for feeling overloaded today. Be sure to support your points with examples from what you have read, from what you have heard other say, and/or from your own experiences.

2. The authors of “Overloaded?” assert that “Today’s kids are tech addicts,” and ask, “Is it robbing their creativity or preparing them for the future?” Select one type of technology and consider how it has affected you or your peers (perhaps how people interact, accomplish tasks, and/or solve problems, for example). Have the effects been beneficial, for the most part. Or have the effects been harmful, overall? Write a persuasive essay that explains the effects of the technology on you and your peers, and clearly state your position on whether the effects are primarily beneficial or harmful. Be sure to support your points with examples from what you have read, from what you have heard others say, and/or from your own experiences.

3. In the article “Overloaded?” the authors note that “saddling kids with too many activities may be taxing their young brains” and claim that technology has helped to cause this problem. What do you think could be done to solve the problem of young people feeling overloaded by technology and/or life in general? Write a persuasive essay that suggests ways to solve the problem. Be sure to support your points with examples from what you have read, from what you have heard others say, and/or from your own experiences.
APPENDIX E: ORIGINAL STUDY METHODOLOGY

Questionnaire

This questionnaire will be given at the beginning, middle, and end of the summer placement program.

- What criteria are the most important to you as you read students’ placement essays?
- What has been the most difficult thing about placing the essays?
- What has been the easiest thing about placing the essays?
- Do you remember anything important or unusual about recent essays?
- Is there anything you would want to change about the way you recently read or placed essays?

First Individual Interview Questions

- What courses have you taught? In which disciplines? How many years have you been teaching? Aside from teaching, have you done other kinds of interactive work with students?
- What training have you had in placing essays, holistically or otherwise, at Bowling Green State University and/or elsewhere? (153).
- What issues do you anticipate will arise in this year’s placement program?
- What difficulties do you anticipate in placing essays?
- How do you think participating in placement reading will affect your teaching whether inside or outside of class?
- If you anticipate that placement reading will affect your way of thinking about teaching, describe how.

Second and Third Individual Interview Questions

Brackets denote that information will inserted after data has been coded from transcripts.

- In the pair evaluation session on [insert date] you referred to the criterion [insert criterion]. What are your thoughts on this particular criterion?
- In the pair evaluation session on [insert date] you said [“insert quote”] in relation to making a placement decision based upon the criterion/criteria [insert criterion or criteria]. Why did you refer to this/these criterion/criteria in placing the essay? [Allow the interviewee to look at relevant passages in the transcripts.]
- On several placement note sheets, you wrote the criterion/criteria [insert criterion/criteria]. Why did you refer to this/these criterion/criteria so frequently on your placement note sheet? [Allow the interviewee to look at the relevant placement note sheets.]
- Based upon recent pair evaluation sessions, you have used the criterion/criteria [insert criterion/criteria] frequently in placing essays? Why is this/these criterion/criteria important in your placement decisions?
First Interview with Paired Evaluators

- Have you taught collaboratively before? If so, what are your thoughts on teaching collaboratively?
- Have you assessed essays collaboratively before? If so, what kind of criteria did you use to evaluate writing (e.g., holistic, analytic, primary trait scoring)?
- What are your thoughts on collaborating with your evaluation partner to place essays?
- Do you anticipate any difficulties in placing essays with your evaluation partner?
- If you have assessed writing collaboratively, do you recall moments in which you changed your mind about something: an evaluation, a criterion, a standard, etc.? Describe the process of changing your mind.
- If you have assessed writing collaboratively, did you ever disagree with another assessor? If so, how did you resolve the disagreement(s)?
- If you assessed writing collaboratively, did you try to change others’ minds? What about? How did you know that? How successful do you think you were? How do you know?

Second and Third Interviews with Paired Evaluators

**Brackets denote that information will be inserted after data has been coded from transcripts. Both participants will respond to each question.**

- To what extent do you agree with your partner’s evaluative judgments in making placement decisions?
- To what extent do you disagree with your partner’s evaluative judgments in making placement decisions?
- In a pair evaluation session on [insert date] you both quickly agreed on a particular placement. [Allow both interviewees to look at relevant passages in the transcript.] What are your thoughts on why you both agreed? Why did you agree so quickly?
- In a pair evaluation session on [insert date] you initially disagreed on a particular placement before reaching agreement. [Allow both interviewees to look at relevant passages in the transcripts.] What are your thoughts on this disagreement? Why did you disagree? Why did you reach an agreement?
• Have you tried to change your partner’s mind on a placement decision? How successful do you think you were? How do you know?
• In the pair evaluation sessions on [insert date] you did not reach an agreement concerning a particular placement, and you sent the essay to a third reader. [Allow both interviewees to look at relevant passages in the transcript.] How frequently do you send an essay to the Placement Coordinator and Assistant Placement Coordinator for a third reading? Why do you usually send essays to the third readers?
• How frequently do you refer to your Placement Note Sheet while discussing placement decisions with your partner? To what extent do you rely upon the Placement Note Sheet in your discussions with your partner?

**Midterm and Final Group Interviews**
The same questions will guide both focus groups. Brackets denote that information will inserted after data has been coded from transcripts. Both participants will respond to each question.

• What kinds of criteria or categories of criteria (e.g., organization, grammar, style) do you frequently use to place students in your pair evaluation sessions? Why do you value these categories?
• Specifically, what criteria do you use to place students into English 110, 111, and 112? Why do you value these criteria?
• What do you think are the most important and the least important criteria in placing students? Why do you value particular criteria over other criteria?
• In several pair evaluation sessions, the criterion [insert criterion] emerged as a frequently mentioned criterion in placing students. Why do you think that this criterion was mentioned in several evaluation pairs?
• In pair evaluation sessions, the criterion [insert criterion] was seldom mentioned. Why do you think this criterion was seldom mentioned?
• In pair evaluation sessions, the criterion [insert criterion] was never mentioned. Why do you think this criterion was seldom mentioned?
APPENDIX F: FINDING ARTICLES AND WRITING PROMPTS

Thank you so much for volunteering to help with this phase of the placement process! The following information should help you get a sense of the committee’s agenda for the next several months.

**Three** articles will be used as the required reading for the new version of the online placement test for incoming freshmen. It is up to us to figure out which three it will be. We must also develop three clear and appropriate writing prompts for each chosen article. Therefore, your main tasks will be to locate and evaluate potential articles, and once we settle on our chosen three articles, to help craft effective writing prompts for three chosen articles.

**Step 1: Finding articles**

**NOTE:** The articles MUST be available over BGSU’s library databases in order for us to have copyright permission to use them.

You should read each article and evaluate it based on the following criteria:

- **Subject**--Do you think the subject will be interesting (or at the very least not boring) to students?
- **Readability**--Do you think incoming freshmen will be able to comprehend the language used and the overall ideas presented in the article?
- **Prior Knowledge**--We are looking for articles that can be fully understood without prior knowledge of the subject.
- ** Appropriateness**--Do you think the article lends itself to the type of writing we want the students to do? That is, does it allow students to easily see that there is a controversy or debate about the subject? Can students use the material to support their own opinion about the subject?
- **Length**--Is the article too long? Too short? Too dense? Too sparse? Should only an excerpt be used?

**Step 2: Writing prompts**

Once we choose three articles, we will begin writing prompts to accompany each article. These prompts will then be evaluated (and fine-tuned) based on the following criteria:

- **Clarity**--Will students clearly understand what they are being asked to write about?
- **Relevance**--Do the prompts seem to relate well to the spirit of, or to the main idea of, the article?
- **Amount of Information**--Do the prompts give too much information (are they leading) or too little information to the students?
- **Use of Quotations**--Are the quotations used appropriately and helpful in clarifying the prompt or do they “muddy the waters” for students?
- **Strategy**--Does each prompt effectively utilize a 110/111/112 rhetorical strategy? Will students clearly understand which strategy they are to utilize for each prompt?
2006 Placement Committee Participants

PC06
Participant Consent Form

Eric Stalions
1520 Clough Street, Apt. 150
Bowling Green, Ohio, 43402
(419) 372-0338
sweric@bgnet.bgsu.edu

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in a study concerning your involvement on the Placement Committee for the General Studies Writing Program (GSW) at Bowling Green State University (BGSU). As part of my graduate work in the Department of Rhetoric and Writing at BGSU, I am conducting a study involving Placement Committee members during the Spring 2006 Semester.

This study is part of my dissertation work on the rhetorical values of GSW placement evaluators. The main purpose of the research project for my dissertation will be to identify and analyze the rhetorical values that guide placement evaluators in placing students into one of the first-year writing courses, English 110, English 111, or English 112, during the summer 2006 Placement Program. My study may benefit GSW’s Placement Program; my study may help the GSW Director, Placement Coordinator, Assistant Placement Coordinator, and Placement Evaluators determine the effectiveness of the Placement Program’s placement materials, training sessions, and articulation of the program’s entrance-level criteria and rhetorical values, and consequently, validate and/or revise placement practices and values.

Specifically, the purpose of this study, which involves the Spring 2006 Placement Committee, will be to develop and refine my research questions and methods for studying the summer 2006 Placement Program. This study will enable me to examine how committee members apply their knowledge of entrance and exit-level criteria to guide them in selecting articles and composing prompts for the summer 2006 Placement Program. For your participation, you will have the opportunity to articulate the decision making processes involved in choosing reading selections and creating writing prompts. You may obtain a summary of the results of this study upon request.

This study will require you to be audio taped during each Placement Committee meeting throughout the Spring 2006 semester. The Placement Coordinator will decide the number and length of meetings for the Spring 2006 semester. If you choose not to participate in the study, your quotes will be erased from the audio taped transcripts. However, relevant “topics” or “themes” brought up within the “context” of the committee’s discussions will be included in the transcripts and the research project. In addition, your participation will also involve completing
two interviews, which will also be audio taped, one at the beginning of the spring semester and one at the end of the Placement Committee’s tenure in April. Each interview will last approximately 30 minutes. Finally, this study will require that you submit the reading selections you select and the writing prompts you compose for the online placement materials.

The anticipated risks to you are not greater than those normally encountered in everyday life. However, you may possibly become anxious thinking about the audio taped committee meetings or the interviews; should this situation occur, you would be referred to counseling services.

Your confidentiality as a participant and your contributions during the placement committee meetings and interviews will be protected throughout the study and publication of study results. Your identity will not be revealed in any published results unless you specifically request identification.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you can refrain from answering any or all questions without penalty or explanation. You are free to withdraw consent and to discontinue participation at any time. Your decision to participate will not impact your status on the Placement Committee, your teaching status or assignment, or your relationship to the institution in any way.

If you have any questions or comments about this study, you can contact me at (419) 372-0338 or email me at sweric@bgnet.bgsu.edu. You may also contact Dr. Richard Gebhardt, my dissertation chair, at (419) 372-7212 or email him at richgeb@bgnet.bgsu.edu. If you have any questions about the conduct of this study and your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Chair of Bowling Green State University’s Human Subjects Review Board at (419) 372-7716 (hsrb@bgnet.bgsu.edu).

By signing and returning this form, you are indicating your consent to participate in this project.

Your signature:_____________________________________________ Date:______________
Individual Interview Questions #1

- What are the main rhetorical strategies that you have been using in choosing reading selections for the GSW 2006 Placement Program’s placement materials?
- With respect to criteria for choosing and/or approving reading selections, such as “accessibility,” “appropriateness,” “readability,” and “length,” which criterion has been frequently mentioned in the Placement Committee’s discussions? [Allow interviewee to review the list of criteria for finding articles]. Why do you think this criterion has been mentioned so frequently in the Committee’s discussions?
- Which criterion has been mentioned less frequently in the Placement Committee’s discussions with respect to the selection and/or approval of articles? [Allow interviewee to review the list of criteria for finding articles]. Why do you think that this criterion has been seldom mentioned in the Committee’s discussions?
- In the Placement Committee meeting on [insert date] you mentioned the criterion [insert criterion] with respect to the article [insert article name]. [Allow the interviewee to look at the relevant passage(s) in the transcript and the article.] Why did you feel that this criterion was important in this instance?
- In general, to what extent have you been relying on your experience(s) teaching English 110, English 111, and/or English 112 to choose and/or approve reading selections?
- What are your thoughts on disagreements between or among Placement Committee members concerning the selection and/or approval of articles? How were disagreements typically resolved?
- How has the process of choosing and/or approving reading selections been facilitated and/or hampered by the Committee’s focus on collaborative decision-making?
- How has the process of choosing and/or approving reading selections affected how you teach English 110, English 111, and/or English 112, and/or more generally, how has the process of choosing and/or approving reading selections affected how you think about the GSW curriculum?
Individual Interview Questions #2
These interview questions will be used at the end of the placement committee’s tenure in April 2006.

- In general, discuss the process of choosing reading selections for the GSW 2006 Placement Program? What stands out in your mind?
- In general, discuss the process of writing the prompts to accompany the approved reading selections for the GSW 2006 Placement Program? What stands out in your mind?
- What were the main rhetorical strategies that you used in creating and/or revising writing prompts for the GSW 2006 Placement Program’s placement materials?
- With respect to criteria for writing and/or revising prompts, such as “clarity,” “relevance,” “amount of information,” and “strategy,” which criterion was most frequently mentioned in the Placement Committee’s discussions? [Allow interviewee to review the list of criteria for writing prompts]. Why do you think this criterion was mentioned so frequently in the Committee’s discussions?
- Which criterion was mentioned less frequently in the Placement Committee’s discussions with respect to the creation of writing prompts? [Allow interviewee to review the list of criteria for writing prompts]. Why do you think that this criterion was seldom mentioned in the Committee’s discussions?
- In the Placement Committee meeting on [insert date] you mentioned the criterion [insert criterion] with respect to the writing prompt [insert prompt name and/or number]. [Allow the interviewee to look at the relevant passage(s) in the transcript and the writing prompt.] Why did you feel that this criterion was important in this instance?
- In general, to what extent did you rely on your experience(s) teaching English 110, English 111, and/or English 112 to write and/or revise prompts?
- What are your thoughts on disagreements between or among Placement Committee members concerning the creation and/or revision of writing prompts? How were disagreements typically resolved?
- In general, how was the process of creating and/or revising writing prompts facilitated and/or hampered by the Committee’s focus on collaborative decision-making?
- How has the process of creating and/or revising writing prompts affected how you teach English 110, English 111, and/or English 112, and/or more generally, how has the process of creating and/or revising writing prompts affected how you think about the GSW curriculum?
2005 Placement Program Participants

Participant Consent Form
PP05

Eric Stalions
1520 Clough Street, Apt. 150
Bowling Green, Ohio, 43402
(419) 372-0338
sweric@bgnet.bgsu.edu

Dear Participant,

You are invited to be in a study concerning your participation in the summer 2005 Placement Program for the General Studies Writing Program (GSW) at Bowling Green State University (BGSU). As part of my graduate work in the Department of Rhetoric and Writing at BGSU, I am conducting a study involving placement evaluators (including administrators and teaching assistants) who participated in the GSW Placement program during the summer 2005 Placement Program.

This study is part of my dissertation work on the rhetorical values of GSW placement evaluators. The main purpose of the research project for my dissertation will be to identify and analyze the rhetorical values that guide placement evaluators in placing students into one of the first-year writing courses, English 110, English 111, or English 112, during the summer 2006 Placement Program. My study may benefit GSW’s Placement Program; my study may help the GSW Director, Placement Coordinator, Assistant Placement Coordinator, and Placement Evaluators determine the effectiveness of the Placement Program’s placement materials, training sessions, and articulation of the program’s entrance-level criteria and rhetorical values, and consequently, validate and/or revise placement practices and values.

Specifically, the purpose of this study, which involves 2005 Placement Program administrators and placement evaluators, will be to develop and refine my research questions and methods for studying the summer 2006 Placement Program. You may obtain a summary of the results of this study upon request.

Your participation will involve one audio taped individual interview and/or one videotaped group interview during the Spring 2006 Semester. The time and date of both interviews will depend upon your schedule. The individual interview will last approximately 30 minutes, and the group interview will last approximately 60 minutes.

The anticipated risks to you are not greater than those normally encountered in everyday life. However, you may possibly become anxious thinking about the audio taped interview or videotaped group interview; should this situation occur, you would be referred to counseling services.
Your confidentiality as a participant and your contributions during the interviews will be protected throughout the study and publication of study results. Your identity will not be revealed in any published results unless you specifically request identification.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you can refrain from answering any or all questions without penalty or explanation. You are free to withdraw consent and to discontinue participation at any time. Your decision to participate will not impact your teaching status or assignment or relationship to the institution in any way.

If you have any questions or comments about this study, you can contact me at (419) 372-0338 or email me at sweric@bgnet.bgsu.edu. You may also contact Dr. Richard Gebhardt, my dissertation chair, at (419) 372-7212 or email him at richgeb@bgnet.bgsu.edu. If you have any questions about the conduct of this study and your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Chair of Bowling Green State University’s Human Subjects Review Board at (419) 372-7716 (hsrb@bgnet.bgsu.edu).

By signing and returning this form, you are indicating your consent to participate in this project.

Your signature: ___________________________ Date: _____________

If you signed this form to indicate your consent to participate in this project, please indicate that you are willing to participate by checking one or both interview activities.

___ Yes, I will participate in the audio taped individual interview.

___ Yes, I will participate in the videotaped group interview.
Individual Interview Questions

- As you look back on last year’s placement program, what stands out in your mind?
- If placement evaluation affected your teaching practices, whether inside or outside of class, describe how.
- Approximately what percentage of the time did you agree with your evaluation partner?
- Based on your experience, what evaluative concerns came up individually or in pairs? What do you anticipate might come up this year?
- The principal research question for my study is the following: “What rhetorical values guide Bowling Green State University’s (BGSU) General Studies Writing (GSW) Program placement evaluators in placing students into one of the first-year writing courses, English 110, English 111, or English 112”? I will read each question from the questionnaire that will be given to the placement evaluators at the beginning, middle, and end of the summer 2006 Placement Program. After I read each question, please comment on how useful each question would be in answering the principal research question for my study.
  → “What criteria are the most important to you as you read students’ placement essays?”
  → “What has been the most difficult thing about placing the essays?”
  → “What has been the easiest thing about placing the essays?”
  → “Do you remember anything important or unusual about recent essays?”
  → “Is there anything you would want to change about the way you recently read or placed essays?”
- Can you think of any additional questions for the questionnaire that would be useful in answering the principal research question: “What rhetorical values guide Bowling Green State University’s (BGSU) General Studies Writing (GSW) Program placement evaluators in placing students into one of the first-year writing courses, English 110, English 111, or English 112”??
- As you look back on the placement process, are there any moments that stand out for you? Describe them. What was going on? What was your role? How successfully do you feel you handled the situations?
- If you could change anything about the way the placement program was run last year—or the way it will be run next time—what would you change? What would you do differently?
- Is there anything else that came up that I didn’t mention?
Focus Group Interview Questions

• What do you believe will be the placement evaluators’ primary concerns in placing essays during the GSW 2006 Placement Program?
• What strategies do you anticipate that the placement evaluators will rely on the most in placing essays during the GSW 2006 Placement Program?
• What difficulties do you believe placement evaluators will encounter in placing essays collaboratively during the GSW 2006 Placement Program?
• How and to what extent will the GSW Placement Program’s training sessions affect placement evaluators’ placement decisions during the GSW 2006 Placement Program?
• How and to what extent will the placement evaluators’ prior knowledge of the GSW curriculum affect their placement decisions during the GSW 2006 Placement Program?
• How and to what extent will the placement evaluators’ prior knowledge of students’ performances in their English 110, English 111 and/or English 112 classes affect their placement decisions during the GSW 2006 Placement Program?
• The following is the first question from the questionnaire to be given to the placement evaluators: “What criteria are the most important to you as you read students’ placement essays?” How do you think the placement evaluators will respond to this question at the beginning, middle, and the end of the GSW 2006 Placement Program?
• In general, how and to what extent will placement evaluators’ evaluative tendencies change over the course of the GSW 2006 Placement Program? What evaluative tendencies will change, and why will they change?
• The principal research question for my study is the following: “What rhetorical values guide Bowling Green State University’s (BGSU) General Studies Writing (GSW) Program placement evaluators in placing students into one of the first-year writing courses, English 110, English 111, or English 112”? In general, what issues or challenges do you foresee in addressing this research question?
• With respect to the principal research question, there are several supporting research questions. I will read each supporting research question. After I read each question, please answer each question with respect to your own experiences as placement evaluators and/or administrators during the GSW 2005 Placement Program?
  ➔ “To what extent do readers rely upon their experience and knowledge as teachers to guide their placement decisions?”
  ➔ “To what extent do placement evaluators rely on the entrance-level ‘textual’ criteria for placement as detailed in the Placement Evaluators’ Handbook and training sessions? More specifically, to what extent does the placement evaluation training carry over to actual placement decisions?”
  ➔ “Are there rhetorical values that guide placement decisions not included within the defined parameters of the placement materials and training sessions?”
• Can you think of any additional supporting research questions that would be useful in answering the principal research question: “What rhetorical values guide Bowling Green State University’s (BGSU) General Studies Writing (GSW) Program placement evaluators in placing students into one of the first-year writing courses, English 110, English 111, or English 112”? 
- Are there any issues that you would like to discuss that I didn’t mention?
Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in a study concerning your involvement in the summer 2006 Placement Program for the General Studies Writing Program (GSW) at Bowling Green State University (BGSU). As part of my graduate work in the Department of Rhetoric and Writing at BGSU, I am conducting a study involving placement evaluators (including administrators and teaching assistants) who will participate in the GSW 2006 Placement Program.

This study is part of my dissertation work on the rhetorical values of GSW placement evaluators. The main purpose of the research project for my dissertation will be to identify and analyze the rhetorical values that guide placement evaluators in placing students into one of the first-year writing courses, English 110, English 111, or English 112, during the GSW 2006 Placement Program. My study may benefit GSW’s Placement Program; my study may help the GSW Director, Placement Coordinator, Assistant Placement Coordinator, and Placement Evaluators determine the effectiveness of the Placement Program’s placement materials, training sessions, and articulation of the program’s entrance-level criteria and rhetorical values, and consequently, validate and/or revise placement practices and values. You may obtain a summary of the results of this study upon request.

Your participation will involve three written questionnaires; videotaped and audio taped placement training and norming sessions; audio taped pair evaluation sessions; audio taped “structured” individual, pair, and group interviews; and handwritten “Placement Note Sheets” and materials created during the interviews.

- First, your participation will involve completing a questionnaire at the beginning, middle, and end of the GSW 2006 Placement Program.
- Second, this study will require you to be videotaped and audio taped during the initial training for placement evaluators at the beginning of the GSW 2006 Placement Program and during the norming sessions that will occur periodically throughout the program. The Placement Coordinator will determine the number and length of training and norming sessions.
Third, this study will require you to be audio taped during your daily discussions in making placement decisions with your placement evaluation partner, who will be a teaching assistant.

Fourth, your participation will involve two individual audio taped interviews during the GSW 2006 Placement Program. Each individual interview will last approximately 30 minutes.

Fifth, your participation will involve two audio taped interviews with your evaluation partner. Each interview with your placement evaluation partner will last approximately 30 minutes.

Sixth, this study will require you to participate in three audio taped group interviews, one at the middle of the program, one at end of the program, and one during the fall semester. Each group interview will last approximately 45 minutes.

Finally, this study will require you to submit your daily, handwritten “Placement Note Sheets,” which the Placement Program requires that you use to record your impressions of the textual features of each placement essay, and any materials you create during the interviews.

If you choose not to participate in the study, your quotes will be erased from the videotaped and audio taped transcripts. However, relevant “topics” or “themes” brought up within the “context” of the discussions will be included in the transcripts.

The anticipated risks to you are not greater than those normally encountered in everyday life. However, you may possibly become anxious thinking about the three written questionnaires; videotaped and audio taped placement training and norming sessions; audio taped pair evaluation sessions; audio taped “structured” individual, pair, and group interviews; and handwritten placement note sheets and materials; should this situation occur, you would be referred to counseling services.

Your confidentiality as a participant and your contributions during the interviews will be protected throughout the study and publication of study results. Your identity will not be revealed in any published results unless you specifically request identification. In addition, videotapes, audio tapes, computer files, and printed transcripts will be stored in a secure, locked environment.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you can refrain from answering any or all questions without penalty or explanation. You are free to withdraw consent and to discontinue participation at any time. Your decision to participate will not impact your status as a placement evaluator, your teaching status or assignment, or relationship to the institution in any way.

If you have any questions or comments about this study, you can contact me at (419) 372-0338 or email me at sweric@bgnet.bgsu.edu. You may also contact Dr. Richard Gebhardt, my
dissertation chair, at (419) 372-7212 or email him at richgeb@bgsu.edu. If you have any questions about the conduct of this study and your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Chair of Bowling Green State University’s Human Subjects Review Board at (419) 372-7716 (hsrb@bgsu.edu).

By signing, dating, and returning this form, you are indicating your consent to participate in this project. A copy of this consent form will be provided to you upon request.

Your signature:_____________________________________________ Date:______________
2006 Placement Program Participants

Participant Consent Form
A 06

Eric Stalions
1520 Clough Street, Apt. 150
Bowling Green, Ohio, 43402
(419) 372-0338
sweric@bgnet.bgsu.edu

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in a study concerning your involvement in the summer 2006 Placement Program for the General Studies Writing Program (GSW) at Bowling Green State University (BGSU). As part of my graduate work in the Department of Rhetoric and Writing at BGSU, I am conducting a study involving placement evaluators (including administrators and teaching assistants) who will participate in the GSW 2006 Placement Program.

This study is part of my dissertation work on the rhetorical values of GSW placement evaluators. The main purpose of the research project for my dissertation will be to identify and analyze the rhetorical values that guide placement evaluators in placing students into one of the first-year writing courses, English 110, English 111, or English 112, during the GSW 2006 Placement Program. My study may benefit GSW’s Placement Program; my study may help the GSW Director, Placement Coordinator, Assistant Placement Coordinator, and Placement Evaluators determine the effectiveness of the Placement Program’s placement materials, training sessions, and articulation of the program’s entrance-level criteria and rhetorical values, and consequently, validate and/or revise placement practices and values. You may obtain a summary of the results of this study upon request.

First, this study will require you to be videotaped and audio taped during the initial training for placement evaluators at the beginning of the GSW 2006 Placement Program and during the norming sessions that will occur periodically throughout the program. As the Placement Coordinator, you will determine the number and length of training and norming sessions. Second, this study will require you to participate in three audio taped group interviews, one at the middle of the program, one at end of the program, and one during the fall semester. Each group interview will last approximately 45 minutes. If you choose not to participate in the study, your quotes will be erased from the videotaped and audio taped transcripts. However, relevant “topics” or “themes” brought up within the “context” of the discussions will be included in the transcripts.

The anticipated risks to you are not greater than those normally encountered in everyday life. However, you may possibly become anxious thinking about the videotaped and audio taped placement training and norming sessions and audio taped group interviews; should this situation occur, you would be referred to counseling services.
Your confidentiality as a participant and your contributions during the interviews will be protected throughout the study and publication of study results. Your identity will not be revealed in any published results unless you specifically request identification. In addition, videotapes, audio tapes, computer files, and printed transcripts will be stored in a secure, locked environment.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you can refrain from answering any or all questions without penalty or explanation. You are free to withdraw consent and to discontinue participation at any time. Your decision to participate will not impact your status as a placement administrator, your teaching status or assignment, or relationship to the institution in any way.

If you have any questions or comments about this study, you can contact me at (419) 372-0338 or email me at sweric@bgnet.bgsu.edu. You may also contact Dr. Richard Gebhardt, my dissertation chair, at (419) 372-7212 or email him at richgeb@bgnet.bgsu.edu. If you have any questions about the conduct of this study and your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Chair of Bowling Green State University’s Human Subjects Review Board at (419) 372-7716 (hsrb@bgnet.bgsu.edu).

By signing, dating, and returning this form, you are indicating your consent to participate in this project. A copy of this consent form will be provided to you upon request.

Your signature: ___________________________________ Date: __________
Questionnaires

Questionnaire #1

Brackets denote information for the principal researcher (e.g. research questions). This questionnaire will be given at the beginning, middle, and end of the placement program.

Instructions to Participants: Please spend a few minutes to write responses the questions below.

[Supporting Research Questions 1 and 3]: Consider all the different things you look for in a placement essay. Which one comes to the forefront as the single, most important one you use now?

[Supporting Research Question 3]: Given all the things that you look for in placement essays, what is your “system of priority” in placing essays? In other words, what things do you consider first, second, third, and so on, in placing essays now?

[Supporting Research Questions 1, 3, and 7]: What do you find easy about placing essays now? Why is this aspect of placing essays easy now?

[Supporting Research Questions 1, 6, and 7]: Have there been any recent essays that were difficult to place? Why were these recent essays difficult to place, and how did you place these difficult cases?

[Supporting Research Question 2]: If you could change one recent placement decision, what decision would you change, and why would you change it?

[Supporting Research Questions 1 and 6]: With respect to “borderline” placement decisions (regarding essays that are perceived to exhibit features of two placement categories), what factors are the most important to you in deciding which placement category a “borderline” essay goes into at this point? Feel free to focus only on one borderline placement decision, such as a recent 110/111 or 111/112 placement decision.

[Supporting Research Question 3]: What factors have recently led you and your partner to send a placement essay to a third reader—the Placement Coordinator or Assistant Placement Coordinator?
Questionnaire #2

Brackets denote information for the principal researcher (e.g. research questions) and/or information that will be coded and inserted from the data.

Instructions to Participants: Please spend a few minutes to write responses to the questions below.

[Supporting Research Questions 1 and 3]: In the first questionnaire, you wrote that you consider [insert participant’s response from the first questionnaire] to be the single, most important thing that you look for in placement essays. Do you still consider this to be the most important thing that you look for in placement essays? If so, explain why you still consider this to be the single, most important thing that you look for in placement essays. If not, identify the single, most important thing that you now look for in placement essays, and explain why you now look for this thing in placement essays.

[Supporting Research Question 3]: In the first questionnaire, you wrote that your “system of priority” in placing essays is (in order of significance) the following: [insert participant’s response from the first questionnaire]. Do you still use this “system of priority” in placing essays? If so, explain why you still use this “system of priority.” If your “system of priority” has changed, provide your new “system of priority” (i.e., what things do you consider first, second, third, and so on, in placing essays), and briefly explain why you have altered and/or changed your “system of priority.”

[Supporting Research Questions 1, 3, and 7]: What do you find easy about placing essays individually? What do you find easy about placing essays with [insert evaluation partner’s name].

[Supporting Research Questions 1, 6, and 7]: Have there been any recent essays that were difficult to place individually? What have you found difficult about placing essays with [insert evaluation partner’s name].

[Supporting Research Question 2]: Upon reflection, has there been a recent placement decision that you would like to change? If so, why would you change it?

[Supporting Research Questions 1 and 6]: With respect to “borderline” placement decisions (regarding essays that are perceived to exhibit features of two placement categories), you wrote that the factor/s [insert participant’s response from the first questionnaire] is/are the most important to you in deciding whether an essay goes into [insert placement category or categories]. Do you still consider this/these factor/s when making such borderline placements? If so, briefly discuss this/these factor/s. If not, identify what factor/s is/are now most important to you in deciding which placement category such “borderline” essays go into at this point.

[Supporting Research Question 3]: What factors have recently led you and your partner to send a placement essay to a third reader? In other words, why do you usually send essays to a third reader? If have not sent any essays to a third reader, explain why.
Questionnaire #3

Name: [Insert Placement Reader’s Name]

Brackets denote information for the principal researcher (e.g. research questions) and/or information that will be coded and inserted from the data.

Instructions to Participants: Please spend a few minutes to write responses to the questions below.

[Supporting Research Questions 1 and 3]: What is the single, most important “thing” that you look for now in placement essays? Now think of this “thing” with respect to the “range” or “continuum” of placement categories. In other words, consider how this “thing” changes across the placement category range. Below, please visually depict how this “thing” changes across the placement category range from 110S to 112+. Feel free to use words, drawings, or any else you prefer to depict this “thing” across the placement category range (with respect to the diagram below).

110S 110 110+ 111- 111 111+ 112- 112 112+

<___________________________________________________________________________>

[Supporting Research Question 2]: Has there been a placement decision in the past week you would like to change? If so, why would you change it?

[Supporting Research Questions 1, 3, 6, and 7]: What have you found easy about placing essays in the past week either individually and/or collaboratively? What have you found difficult about placing essays in the past week individually and/or collaboratively?

[Supporting Research Questions 1 and 6]: With respect to “borderline” placement decisions (regarding essays that are perceived to exhibit features of two adjacent placement categories), explain what factors are the most important to you now in deciding whether an essay goes into [insert placement category or categories].

[Supporting Research Question 3]: What factors have led you and your partner to send a placement essay to a third reader in the past week? If have not sent any essays to a third reader in the past week, explain why.
First Individual Interview Questions

Brackets denote information for the principal researcher (e.g. research questions) and/or information that will be coded and inserted from the data. There are two sets of questions—the “research question-specific questions” and “general questions.” I will choose questions from one and/or both lists depending upon what evaluative issues emerge from the data. I will ask questions until 30 minutes have elapsed.

Research-Question Specific Questions

[Supporting Research Question 1]: In one instance, you wrote the features [insert features] on your “Placement Note Sheet” with respect to the “borderline” placement [insert 110/111 or 111/112] before discussing your placement with your partner. [Provide the interviewee with a copy of the placement essay.] How did these features factor into your decision to indicate the borderline placement [insert 110/111 or 111/112 placement] on your “Placement Note Sheet?” Why did you finally decide to place the essay into [insert 110, 111, or 112] with your evaluation partner. [Allow interviewee to look at the transcript regarding this placement discussion].

[Supporting Research Question 2]: During the week of [insert week], earlier in the placement process, you frequently wrote the feature [insert feature] on your “Placement Note Sheet.” During the week of [insert week], a more recent week, you seldom wrote this same feature. Why did you write this feature so frequently earlier, and why do you no longer note this feature with the same frequency?

[Supporting Research Question 3] For one particular placement [insert 110, 111, or 112], you wrote the features [insert features] in the “notes” section of your Placement Note Sheet. Discuss your system of evaluative priorities with respect to these features? In general, how did you or do you prioritize these features with respect to global, high-order concerns and local, low-order local concerns?

[Supporting Research Question 4]: On several instances, you wrote the feature [insert feature] on your Placement Note Sheets. This feature seems to refer to the entrance-level “textual” feature [insert feature] for placement in the GSW Placement Evaluators’ Handbook. Why have you found this “feature” important in your placement decisions?

[Supporting Research Questions 5]: In one instance, you wrote the feature [insert feature] on your Placement Note Sheet on [insert date]. [Allow the interviewee to read the transcript]. This “feature” seems to refer to your current and/or former students’ writing abilities in your English 110, 111, and/or 112 class(es). If this is so, why did you find this “feature” important in your placement decision?

[Supporting Research Questions 6]: In one instance, you wrote the feature [insert feature] on your Placement Note Sheet on [insert date]. [Allow the interviewee to read the transcript]. This “feature” seems to speculate about students’ writing abilities. Why did you find this “feature” important in your placement decision?
[Supporting Research Question 7]: In one instance, you wrote the feature [insert feature] on your Placement Note Sheet on [insert date]. This “feature” seems to refer to the perception that an essay appeared to fall outside one of the placement categories. Elaborate on this “feature.”

[Supporting Research Questions 8]: In one instance, you wrote the feature [insert feature] on your Placement Note Sheet on [insert date]. This “feature” seems to refer to a persuasive essay assignment in English 110, 111, or 112. Elaborate on this “feature.” Why did you find this “feature” important in your placement decision?

[Supporting Research Question 8]: In one instance, you wrote the feature [insert feature] on your Placement Note Sheet on [insert date]. [Allow the interview to read the transcript]. This “feature” seems to refer to a curricular exemplar in English 110, 111, or 112. In other words, you seem to be referring to model essays or examples from English 110, 111, or 112, in your discussion. If this is so, elaborate on this “feature.” Why did you find this feature important in your placement decision?

General Questions

What courses have you taught at BG and/or elsewhere? In which disciplines? How many years have you been teaching?

How many years have you participated in the GSW Placement Program? Briefly describe your former role(s) in the program if applicable.

On several placement note sheets, you wrote the feature [insert features]. Why did you refer to this feature/these features so frequently on your “Placement Note Sheet?” [Allow the interviewee to look at the relevant transcribed Placement Note Sheets.] Describe this feature and discuss why it has been important in your placement decisions.

On several occasions, you wrote the feature [insert feature] on your “Placement Note Sheet” to place students into English 110 before discussing your placement with your partner. Why do you frequently consider this feature in English 110 placement decisions?

On several occasions, you wrote the feature [insert feature] on your “Placement Note Sheet” to place students into English 111 before discussing your placement with your partner. Why do you frequently consider this feature in English 111 placement decisions?

On several occasions, you wrote the feature [insert feature] on your “Placement Note Sheet” to place students into English 112 before discussing this placement with your partner. Why do you frequently consider this feature in English 112 placement decisions?

You have seldom/never written the feature [insert feature] on your “Placement Note Sheet;” however, your evaluation partner has written this feature frequently on his/her “Placement Note Sheet.” What are your thoughts on why your evaluation partner wrote this feature more frequently than you?
Second Individual Interview Questions

Brackets denote information for the principal researcher (e.g. research questions) and/or information that will be coded and inserted from the data. There are two sets of questions—the “research question-specific questions” and “general questions.” I will choose questions from one and/or both lists depending upon what evaluative issues emerge from the data. I will ask questions until 30 minutes have elapsed.

Research-Question Specific Questions

[Supporting Research Question 1]: On the date [insert date], you mentioned the feature or evaluative issue [insert feature and/or evaluative issue] with regard to you and your partner’s decision not to place a “borderline” placement [insert 110/111 or 111/112] before giving the essay to a third reader for placement. How did these features and/or evaluative issues factor into you and your partner’s decision not to place the essay and give it to a third reader, the Placement Coordinator or Assistant Placement Coordinator? [Allow interviewee to look at both the placement note sheet transcript and placement discussion transcript].

[Supporting Research Question 2]: During the week of [insert dates], earlier in the placement process, you frequently discussed the feature or evaluative issue [insert feature and/or evaluative issue] in your placement discussions with your partner. During the week of [insert week], a more recent week, you seldom discussed this same feature and/or evaluative issue. Why did you mention this feature or evaluative issue so frequently earlier, and why have you not discussed this feature or evaluative issue more recently?

[Supporting Research Question 3]: For one particular placement [insert 110, 111, or 112], you both discussed the feature or evaluative issues [insert features or evaluative issues]. During your discussion, you seemed to prioritize one feature or evaluative issue [insert feature or evaluative issue] over the feature or evaluative issue [insert feature or evaluative issue]. As a pair, discuss your evaluative priorities with respect to these two features or evaluative issues? How did you or do you prioritize these features or evaluative issues with respect to global, high order concerns and local, low order, local concerns? In general, how do you both collaboratively prioritize features or evaluative issues? [Allow interviewee to look at both the placement note sheet transcript and placement discussion transcript].

[Supporting Research Question 4]: In several instances, you discussed the feature or evaluative issue [insert evaluative issue] with your partner. This issue seems to refer to Placement Coordinator’s instructions and/or the entrance-level “textual” feature [insert feature] for placement in the GSW Placement Evaluators’ Handbook. Why have you found this feature or issue important in your placement discussions? [Allow interviewee to look at both the placement note sheet transcript and placement discussion transcript].

[Supporting Research Questions 5]: In one instance, you discussed the feature or evaluative issue [insert feature or evaluative issue] on [insert date] with you partner. [Allow interviewee to look at both the placement note sheet transcript and placement discussion transcript]. This feature or evaluative issue seems to refer to your current and/or former students’ writing abilities
in your English 110, 111, and/or 112 class(es). Why did you find this feature or evaluative issue important in your collaborative, final placement decision?

**[Supporting Research Question 5]**: In one instance, you discussed the feature or evaluative issue [insert feature or evaluative issue] on [insert date] with you partner. [Allow interviewee to look at both the placement note sheet transcript and placement discussion transcript]. This issue seems to refer to your experience(s) teaching English 110, 111, and/or 112 class(es). Elaborate on this issue. Why did you find this feature or issue important in your collaborative, placement discussion?

**[Supporting Research Questions 5]**: In one instance, you discussed the feature or evaluative issue [insert feature or evaluative issue] on [insert date] with you partner. [Allow interviewee to look at both the placement note sheet transcript and placement discussion transcript]. This issue seems to refer to the student’s proficient or not proficient attempt at writing the essay. Why did you find this feature or evaluative issue important in your collaborative placement discussion?

**[Supporting Research Questions 6]**: In one instance, you discussed the feature or evaluative issue [insert feature or evaluative issue] with your partner on [insert date]. [Allow interviewee to look at both the placement note sheet transcript and placement discussion transcript]. This evaluative issue seems to speculate about the student’s writing abilities. Why did you find it useful to speculate about the student’s writing abilities with regard to your collaborative, placement discussion?

**[Supporting Research Question 7]**: In one instance, you discussed the feature or evaluative issue [insert feature or evaluative issue] with your partner on [insert date]. [Allow interviewee to look at both the placement note sheet transcript and placement discussion transcript]. This feature or evaluative issue seems to refer to the perception that an essay appeared to be non-persuasive. Discuss why you felt the essay exhibited non-argumentative features.

**[Supporting Research Question 8]**: In one instance, you discussed the feature or evaluative issue [insert feature or evaluative issue] on [insert date] with you partner. [Allow interviewee to look at both the placement note sheet transcript and placement discussion transcript]. This issue seems to refer to a persuasive essay assignment in English 110, 111, or 112. Elaborate on this feature or evaluative issue. Why did you find this feature or evaluative issue important in your placement discussion?

**[Supporting Research Questions 8]**: In one instance, you discussed the feature or evaluative issue [insert feature or evaluative issue] on [insert date] with you partner. [Allow interviewee to look at both the placement note sheet transcript and placement discussion transcript]. This feature or evaluative issue seems to refer to a curricular exemplar in English 110, 111, or 112. In other words, you seem to be referring to model essays or examples from English 110, 111, or 112, in your discussion. Elaborate on this feature or evaluative issue. Why did you find this feature or evaluative issue important concerning curricular exemplars important in your placement discussion?
First Interview with Paired Evaluators Questions

Brackets denote information for the principal researcher (e.g. research questions) and/or information that will be coded and inserted from the data. Both placement evaluators will respond to the questions. The interview consists of two interview activities; however, the interview will last no longer than 30 minutes.

Activity #1

[Supporting Research Question 3]: Briefly discuss the process of assessing placement essays together. At this point, what seem to be your evaluative priorities when you place essays together? In other words, what has been some primary evaluative focal points, or evaluative issues, that have arisen in your discussions?

[Supporting Research Question 3]: In a pair evaluation session on [insert date], you both quickly agreed on the placement [insert placement decision] for this essay. [Provide a copy of the essay, and then allow both interviewees to look at relevant passages in the transcript concerning the discussion of this essay.] What are your thoughts on why you both agreed? Why did you agree so quickly?

[Supporting Research Question 3]: In a pair evaluation session on [insert date], the focal point, or main issue of the placement [insert placement decision] seemed to be [insert evaluative issue] for this essay. [Provide a copy of the essay, and then allow both interviewees to look at relevant passages in the transcript concerning the discussion of this essay.] What are your thoughts on why this particular discussion focused primarily on this issue?

[Supporting Research Question 3]: In a pair evaluation session on [insert date], you initially disagreed on the placement [insert placement decision—English 110, 111, or 112] for this essay. [Provide a copy of the essay, and then allow both interviewees to look at relevant passages in the transcript concerning the discussion of this essay.] What are your thoughts on this disagreement? Why did you disagree? Why did you finally reach an agreement and place the essay?

[Supporting Research Question 3]: In a pair evaluation session on [insert date], you [insert name] persuaded your partner [insert name] to place the essay [provide a copy of the essay to the interviewees] into [English 110, 111, or 112]. [Then allow both interviewees to look at relevant passages in the transcripts.] Why was [insert name] able to persuade you? Explain that process.

[Supporting Research Question 3]: In the pair evaluation session on [insert date], you did not reach agreement on the placement [insert placement decision] for this essay [provide a copy of the essay to the interviewees], and you sent this essay to a third reader. [Allow both interviewees to look at relevant passages in the transcript.] Discuss the factors that led to your decision to give this essay to the Placement Coordinator and/or Assistant Placement Coordinator, and discuss why you usually send such essays to a third reader.
Activity #2

Instructions to Participants: I have typed a list of recurring, key features that you have discussed aloud and/or written on your “Placement Note Sheet” with respect to features that influenced your decisions to place students into the three principal placement categories, English 110, English 111, and English 112 over the period of [insert dates] for both of you. [Provide each interviewee with this list of “key features” categorized by placement category—English 110, 111, or 112]. Please follow the instructions.

1) Using these key features (or other features you can think of), visually depict the “features” you primarily use in placing essays into each placement category, English 110, 111, and 112, in a map. For example, you [insert name] wrote the feature [insert criteria] on your “Placement Note Sheet.” Think of this as a clustering activity, an activity you might use with your English 110, 111, or 112 students. [Show the interviewees an example of clustering from the Simon & Schuster Handbook, GSW’s approved handbook]. Group, cluster, or visually connect in some way several of these features from each placement category together. These features might be strengths and weaknesses (e.g. synonyms and antonyms). You do not have to both agree on these features to include them in your map; simply include all the primary things you have recently considered while making placement decisions with respect to the placement categories.

2) Briefly describe your maps to me and define the terms to explain the significance of the features.
Second Interview with Paired Evaluators Questions

Brackets denote information for the principal researcher (e.g., research questions), information concerning materials to be given to the participants, and/or information that will be coded and inserted from the data. Both placement evaluators will respond to the questions. I may have participants read two, three, four, or more placement essays and respond to the corresponding questions; how many essays they will read and how many questions they will respond to (as well as the order of the questions) will depend upon the length of the placement essays and amount of time available for questions. The interview will last no longer than 30 minutes.

Instructions to Participants: [Before reading the instructions, provide each participant with a folder of essays and a placement note sheet.] I would like you to read and place [insert number] essays; each packet contains the same essays. You have not placed these essays previously; however, the essays in the packet have already been placed by another pair of readers. Go through your usual placement process; read each essay, and make notes and write each placement decision on your placement note sheet. Then audio tape your discussion and placement decisions. However, after you finish discussing and placing the [insert number] essays, do not turn off the tape recorder. I will ask you both some questions about the essays you will have placed as well as a concluding question about your collaborative placement process.

Questions

[Supporting Research Question 1]: [The following questions refer to a placement essay that is particularly weak, and placement evaluators had previously placed this essay into English 110 or English 110S]. Please answer the following questions about [refer to specific placement essay]. The two placement evaluators placed this essay individually into [insert 110S or English 110] and [insert 110S or English 110], and they decided collaboratively on the placement [insert 110S or English 110]. First, what are your thoughts on their “initial” individual placement decisions and “final” collaborative placement decision? Second, what weaknesses did you note in this essay, and how did these weaknesses factor into your “initial” individual placement decisions and “final” collaborative placement decision? Third, what strengths did you note in this essay, if any, and how did these strengths factor into your “initial” individual placement decisions and/or “final” collaborative placement decision?

[Supporting Research Question 1]: [The following questions refer to a placement essay that at least one evaluator (on a placement note sheet and/or in a previous paired evaluation session) indicated was “borderline”--an essay perceived to exhibit features of two adjacent placement categories, such as 110/111 or 111/112]. Please answer the following questions about [refer to specific placement essay]. The two placement evaluators placed this essay individually into [insert 110S, 110-, 110, 110+, 111-, 111, 111+, 112-, 112, 112+, 110/111, or 111/112] and [insert 110S, 110-, 110, 110+, 111-, 111, 111+, 112-, 112, 112+, 110/111, or 111/112], and they decided collaboratively on the placement [insert 110S, 110-, 110, 110+, 111-, 111, 111+, 112-, 112, 112+, 110/111, or 111/112]. [Insert “One reader” or “Both readers”] indicated that this placement essay was a “borderline” essay--an essay perceived to exhibit features of two adjacent placement categories. First, do you agree or disagree that this essay exhibits “borderline” features in your opinion?
Explain why or why not. Second, what are your thoughts on their “initial” individual placement decisions and “final” collaborative placement decision in general? Finally, why did you place this essay into [English 110S, 110, 111, or 112], and what were some of the essay’s primary features that led to your “initial” individual placement decisions and/or “final” collaborative placement decision?

[Supporting Research Question 8]: [The following questions refer to a placement essay that at least one evaluator (on a placement note sheet and/or in a previous paired evaluation session) noted a resemblance to an argumentative essay assignment written in a English 110, English 111, or English 112 class and/or a curricular exemplar, such as an “Arguing a Position,” “Proposing a Solution,” “Speculating about Causes,” “Justifying an Evaluation,” “Critique,” “Multiple Source Essay,” and/or “Researched Essay” assignment(s)]. Please answer the following questions about [refer to specific placement essay]. The two placement evaluators placed this essay individually into [insert 110S, 110-, 110, 110+, 111-, 111, 111+, 112-, 112, 112+, 110/111, or 111/112] and [insert 110S, 110, 110+, 111-, 111, 111+, 112-, 112, 112+, 110/111, or 111/112], and they decided collaboratively on the placement [insert 110S, 110-, 110, 110+, 111-, 111, 111+, 112-, 112, 112+, 110/111, or 111/112]. [Insert “One reader” or “Both readers”] indicated that this placement essay resembled the argumentative essay assignment(s) [insert “Arguing a Position,” and/or “Proposing a Solution,” and/or “Speculating about Causes,” and/or “Justifying an Evaluation,” and/or “Critique,” and/or “Multiple Source Essay,” and/or “Researched Essay” assignment(s)]. First, do you agree or disagree that this essay resembles this/these essay assignment(s)? Explain why this essay does or does not resemble this/these assignment(s). Second, what are your thoughts on their “initial” individual placement decisions and “final” collaborative placement in general? Finally, why did you place this essay into [English 110S, 110, 111, or 112], and what were some of the essay’s primary features that led to your initial placement decisions and/or final placement?

[Supporting Research Question 7]: [The following questions refer to a placement essay that at least one evaluator (on a placement note sheet or in a previous paired evaluation session) indicated had been written partially or mostly in a non-persuasive or non-argumentative genre or mode and/or off prompt.] Please answer the following questions about [refer to specific placement essay]. The two placement evaluators placed this essay individually into [insert 110S, 110-, 110, 110+, 111-, 111, 111+, 112-, 112, 112+, 110/111, or 111/112] and [insert 110S, 110, 110+, 111-, 111, 111+, 112-, 112, 112+, 110/111, or 111/112], and they decided collaboratively on the placement [insert 110S, 110-, 110, 110+, 111-, 111, 111+, 112-, 112, 112+, 110/111, or 111/112]. [Insert “One reader” or “Both readers”] indicated that this placement essay had been written in part or whole in the non-persuasive or non-argumentative genre(s) by referring to the essay’s [insert pertinent non-persuasive or non-argumentative feature(s)]. First, do you agree or disagree that this essay exhibits this/these non-persuasive or non-argumentative feature(s)? Explain why this essay does or does not exhibit these features, and/or discuss other non-persuasive or non-argumentative feature(s) that this essay exhibits? Second, what are your thoughts on their “initial” individual placement decisions and “final” collaborative placement decision in general? Finally, why did you place this essay into [English 110S, 110, 111, or 112], and what were some of the essay’s primary features and/or qualities that led to your “initial” individual placement decisions and/or “final” collaborative placement decision?
[Supporting Research Question 1]: [The following questions refer to a placement essay that is particularly strong, and placement evaluators had previously placed this essay into English 112]. Please answer the following questions about [refer to placement essay]. The two placement evaluators placed this essay individually into [Insert 112- or English 112] and [Insert 112 or English 112-], and they decided collaboratively on the placement [Insert 112 or English 112-]. Please answer the following questions about [refer to specific placement essay]. First, what are your thoughts on their “initial” individual placement decisions and “final” collaborative placement decision? Second, what strengths did you note in this essay, and how did these strengths factor into your “initial” individual placement decisions and/or “final” collaborative placement decision? Third, what weaknesses did you note in this essay, if any, and how did these weaknesses factor into your “initial” individual placement decisions and/or “final” collaborative placement decision?

Concluding Question

[Supporting Research Question 2]: In general, what if anything has changed in the way you place essays collaboratively since the last time I interviewed you both? To what extent has your system of evaluative priorities remained constant or unchanged? Before answering these questions, consider these questions in light of the amount of experience you have placing essays. For instance, [insert placement evaluator’s name] has [insert how many years this evaluator has placed essays] experience placing essays.
First Group Interview Questions

The purpose of the first and second group interviews is to allow participants to discuss central, recurring evaluative issues or themes that seem important to placement decisions. Since I will be employing grounded theory, these questions will emerge as the study progresses. I may use some or all of the questions depending upon time constraints or participants’ responses. Also, I may ask the questions in a different order on the day of the group interview. There are two sets of questions—the “research question-specific questions” and “general questions.” I will choose questions from one and/or both lists. Brackets denote information for the principal researcher (e.g. research questions) and/or information that will be coded and inserted from the data. Each group interview will last approximately 45 minutes.

General Instructions to Participants: During this interview, I will read each guiding question and allow time for discussion. In addition, some questions will involve outlining and drawing. Many guiding questions focus on central evaluative issues from the individual and paired interviews and transcribed discussions with evaluation partners. After I read a question, please feel free to respond to the question individually, in pairs, or as a group, unless otherwise directed. I will not participate in the discussion; however, I will repeat, rephrase, or elaborate on questions upon request. When the discussion ends after each question, I will read the next question, and so on, until the end of the interview. However, I may end discussions concerning particular questions in order to allow enough time for other questions. Again, please let me know if you need me to repeat or rephrase questions at any time during the interview. I will now read the first question.

Research-Question Specific Questions

[Supporting Research Question 2, 3, and 4]: Whether you have read and placed placement essays for one, two, three, four, or more years, think about how your initial placement strategies as a placement reader immediately following training at BG or elsewhere--let’s say in your very first week of being a placement reader--compare with the strategies that you now use. You may need to think back to your first week of placing essays last month, last year, or several years ago. Specifically, you may reflect on and discuss how your “system of priority” in placing essays with respect to high and low order concerns has changed or has not changed. Also, you may consider and discuss what you looked for in placement essays during your first week as a newly trained placement reader and what you look for now in placement essays.

[Supporting Research Question 3]: Based upon the interviews and transcribed discussions, usually no one evaluative consideration or feature, such as “word choice” or “structure,” determines one particular placement. There are two questions I would like you to consider with regard to this evaluative issue. I will read both questions now, but I would be glad to reread the first and second questions again. First, I would like you to discuss features that you believe overlap; for example, erratic point of view shifts may indicate a lack of audience awareness. Second, I would like you to discuss any instances when only one or two features may determine a particular placement (if applicable). Please discuss these questions with respect to particular placements you have made recently.
[Supporting Research Question 3]: “Sentence level” issues have been regularly foregrounded as evaluative issues involving placement decisions. As mentioned earlier, usually no one evaluative consideration or feature determines one particular placement. However, as a brainstorming activity, I would like you to create a sentence that “might” be found in a placement essay for each placement category in which “sentence-level concerns” is the primary placement issue strongly influencing placement into each placement category. In this activity, I would like you to create one sentence for English 110S, English 110, English 111, and English 112. You may complete this activity individually or with your evaluation partner. [Provide participants with paper and writing utensils.] Again, because we are focusing on only one primary feature or variable—“sentence-level issues”—each sentence “might” (and I cautiously emphasize “might”) be found in an essay in each placement category. After a few minutes, I will ask some people to read their sentences and explain why each sentence “might” be found in an essay from each placement category.

[Supporting Research Question 3]: Several placement readers have viewed the “five paragraph essay” format as a quote “typical,” “basic,” “standard,” and “formulaic” feature indicating an English 111 placement. Whether you have been using this feature as an English 111 placement category feature or not, why might some readers view this feature as an indicator of English 111 placement? If this is a commonly used placement feature, to what degree must students move beyond or improve upon this feature to warrant English 112 placement?

[Supporting Research Question 4]: With respect to Gina’s recent norming sessions that took place on [insert dates], have these sessions influenced your placement strategies and/or decisions with respect to [insert placement categories and/or types] placements? If not, discuss why these sessions have not influenced your placement strategies and/or decisions. If so, discuss to what extent these sessions have influenced your placement decisions and/or strategies. In either case, you may want to discuss how various factors, such as prior experience reading placement essays, have influenced to what degree these norming sessions have impacted your placement strategies and/or decisions.

[Supporting Research Question 7]: Some paired evaluators have sent essays that exhibit ESL features to a third reader. Whether or not you have sent an essay to a third reader, discuss the features an essay “must” or “might” possess for you and your partner to mark the essay for a third reading.

[Supporting Research Question 7]: Some placement readers have noted or discussed genres or modes of writing that fall outside of the GSW curriculum, such as the narrative, informative, or journalistic genres. In general, how do you approach essays that exhibit such non-persuasive modes? Specifically, how do you place essays that subtly and/or overtly exhibit these non-persuasive genres?

[Supporting Research Question 8]: During pair evaluation sessions and interviews, several placement readers have noted the degree of sophistication of placement essays with respect to one or more of the essay assignments taught in the GSW course sequence—proposing a solution, speculating about causes, and arguing a position essays. With respect to the English 111 and English 112 placement categories, I would like you to outline a proposing a solution, speculating
about causes, or arguing a position “placement” essay that would fall into the 111 placement category; then outline a proposing a solution, speculating about causes, or arguing a position “placement” essay that would fall into the 112 placement category. You may complete this activity individually or with your evaluation partner. [Provide participants with paper and writing utensils.] Choose only one essay “type” for both essays; for example, outline a proposing a solution “placement” essay or a speculating about causes “placement” essay for both placement categories. Please outline “typical” English 111 and English 112 placement essays, not 111- or 111+ or 112- or 112+ proposing a solution, speculating about causes, or arguing a position essays. Please outline the essays in a similar fashion to the outline provided in the Simon & Schuster Handbook. [Show participants a sample outline from the Simon & Schuster Handbook, GSW’s approved handbook]. Please take a few minutes to create your outlines, and then I will ask a few people to present and describe the structure and content of their outlines and how the degree of sophistication differs between these two outlines.

General Questions

Many placement readers have fore grounded “audience awareness” as an important feature in placing essays into English 110, 111, and 112. Because writing is an act of communication between a writer and a reader, I would like you to visually depict how writers “might” approach audience in each of the three placement categories—English 110, 111, and 112. In other words, how do writers conceptualize (or not conceptualize) the audience or audiences of their placement essays? As with the previous question concerning “sentence-level concerns,” I would like you to depict how writers “might” approach audience in each of the three placement categories given that “audience awareness” is the primary placement issue strongly influencing placement into each placement category. When we think of audience rhetorically, we might think of Aristotle’s concept of the rhetorical situation as traditionally represented as a triangle, in which the “subject” (i.e. “speech” or “writing”), “speaker” (i.e. “writer”), and “audience” (i.e. “readers”) are interconnected and necessary for meaningful communication to occur. [Draw Aristotle’s triangle on the chalkboard or whiteboard.] However, feel free to depict the relationship (or lack of relationship) between student writers and their audiences in whatever ways you prefer. You may complete this activity individually or with your evaluation partner. [Provide participants with paper and writing utensils.] In fact, please be creative; your map can include words, drawings, or anything else you prefer. Please take a few minutes to brainstorm and create your drawings, and then I will ask some people to present and describe their drawings.

One main, recurring evaluative issue concerning placement decisions has been [insert evaluative issue]. What are your thoughts on why this evaluative issue has been so important in placement decisions?
Second Group Interview Questions

The purpose of the first and second group interviews is to allow participants to discuss central, recurring evaluative issues or themes that seem important to placement decisions. Since I will be employing grounded theory, these questions will emerge as the study progresses. I may use some or all of the questions and activities depending upon time constraints and/or participants’ responses. I may ask the questions or present activities in a different order on the day of the group interview. There are two parts to this interview--Part A and Part B. I will ask participants to answer questions and complete activities in pairs (or individually if their evaluation partners are not present); the Placement Coordinator, who does not have an evaluation partner, will respond to questions and complete activities individually. Brackets denote information for the principal researcher (e.g. research questions) and/or information that will be coded and inserted from the data. Each group interview will last approximately 45 minutes.

General Instructions to Participants: During this interview, there will be two parts--Part A and Part B. I will not participate in either Part A or Part B; however, I will repeat, rephrase, explain, or elaborate on questions and activities upon request.

Part A.

General Instructions to Participants: For Part A, I will provide “Guiding Questions” and allow time for discussion. Many guiding questions focus on central evaluative issues from the placement note sheets, individual and paired interviews, and transcribed discussions with evaluation partners. Specifically, I will provide you and your evaluation partner (if you have a partner or your partner is present) with a “guiding question” on a piece of paper; each pair (or individual) will receive a question. Please spend a few minutes to discuss the provided “guiding question” with your partner. After several minutes, I will then ask you or your partner to read your “guiding question” and then report what you discussed with your partner to the entire group. Also, you may respond to one another’s reports. After each report and any follow up comments, we will move to another pair and so on. However, I may end discussions concerning particular questions in order to allow enough time for other questions. Please let me know if you need me to repeat, rephrase, or explain questions at any time. Finally, you will be recorded during your discussion with your partner (if applicable) and during your report to the group.

Guiding Questions

According to the Placement Evaluators’ Handbook, students are not required to use an outside source in their placement essays. However, while making placement decisions, several placement readers have discussed how effectively students have incorporated sources into their placement essays. Based on your experience reading and placing essays, how have you and/or your partner factored in this “feature” or “variable”--“source use and integration”--into your placement discussions and/or decisions? For instance, have you regarded “source integration” as a separate evaluative issue, or has “source integration” been an evaluative issue connected to other issues, such as audience awareness, development, structure, etc.? Please explain.
While making placement decisions, several evaluators have discussed how effectively students have responded directly to the writing prompt. Based on your experience reading and placing essays, to what degree (if at all) have you and/or your partner factored this evaluative consideration—“responding to the prompt”—in your placement discussions and/or decisions? Please explain.

[Supporting Research Question #6]: Some placement evaluators have noted that particular students would benefit from a particular GSW course and that placement essays indicated that students needed extra time or course content provided in one of the GSW courses. If you and/or your partner have discussed this evaluative issue, please comment on how this evaluative issue has factored into your placement discussions and/or decisions. Likewise, if you have not discussed this evaluative issue, explain why.

[Supporting Research Question #7]: Some placement evaluators have noted that particular students used inappropriate language in their placement essays. For instance, inappropriate language would include sexist, racist, and/or abusive language. If you and/or your partner have encountered and/or discussed this evaluative issue, please comment on how you dealt with this evaluative issue in your placement discussions and/or decisions.

While making placement decisions, several evaluators have discussed to what extent placement essays exhibit the conventions of academic writing or discourse. Based on your experience reading placement essays, to what degree (if at all) have you and/or your partner factored this evaluative consideration—“academic discourse”—into your placement discussions and/or decisions? Please explain.

While making placement decisions, several evaluators have discussed to what extent placement essays exhibit “creativity.” Based on your experience reading placement essays, to what degree (if at all) have you and/or your partner factored this evaluative consideration—“creativity”—into your placement discussions and/or decisions? Please explain.

While making placement decisions, several evaluators have discussed the [insert “evaluative issue” or “feature”] [name of “evaluative issue” or “feature”]. Based on your experience reading placement essays, to what degree (if at all) have you and/or your partner factored this evaluative consideration—[insert name of “evaluative issue” or “feature”]—into your placement decisions? Please explain.

Part B.

General Instructions to Participants: For Part B, you will complete activities with your evaluation partner or individually if you do not have an evaluation partner or if your partner is absent. These activities will involve outlining, drawing, and listing. I will provide you and your evaluation partner (if applicable) with a written “activity” on a piece of paper and corresponding supporting materials; each pair (or individual) will complete a few activities. Please spend a few minutes to complete each provided “activity” with your partner. After everyone completes each activity, I will ask you and/or your partner to read the instructions for your activity and then describe your outline, drawing, or list to the entire group. You may respond to one another’s
descriptions if you wish. After each description and any follow up comments, we will move to another pair and so on. However, I may end discussions concerning particular activities in order to allow enough time for other activities. After all pairs (or individuals) have finished describing their outlines, drawings, or lists, I will provide pairs (or individuals) with the next activity, and so on. Please let me know if you need me to repeat, rephrase, or explain activities at any time. Again, you will be recorded during your discussion with your partner (if applicable) and during your presentation to the group.

Activities

Activity #1

[Supporting Research Question 8]: During pair evaluation sessions and interviews, several placement readers have noted the degree of sophistication of placement essays with respect to their structure or organization. In this activity, outline a “typical” structure of an essay you and your partner commonly placed into [insert English 110S, English 110, English 111, or English 112]. More specifically, outline a typical “solutions” placement essay that students wrote in response to one of the provided placement prompts. [Provide participants with sample placement writing prompts.] Please outline the essays in a similar fashion to the outline provided in the Simon & Schuster Handbook; in other words, outline the placement essay formally. [Provide participants with a sample outline from the Simon & Schuster Handbook, GSW’s approved handbook]. As you outline this placement essay, think in terms of a “typical” [insert English 110S, English 110, English 111, or English 112] placement essay and not a particularly weak, particularly strong, or borderline essay within this placement category. As you know, the “structure” or “organization” of a placement essay is not by itself a predictor of the [insert English 110S, English 110, English 111, or English 112] placement category; consequently, I intend for this activity to elicit only one typical [insert English 110S, English 110, English 111, or English 112] “solutions” placement essay that you have observed while reading essays. As a result, I will not view your [insert English 110S, English 110, English 111, or English 112] placement essay outline as a structural prototype or model but as one possible structure. Complete this activity with your evaluation partner (unless your partner is absent or you do not have a partner). In a few minutes, I will ask pairs (if applicable) to present and describe the structure and content of their outlines and allow time for any follow up comments.

Activity #2

[Supporting Research Questions 1 and 6]: Over the course of the 2006 Placement Program, placement readers placed essays that appeared to be “borderline” or appeared to exhibit features or characteristics of two placement categories. In this activity, describe the [insert the word “feature” or “characteristic”] [insert name of feature or characteristic] using the provided Venn Diagram for the placement categories [insert English 110 and 111 or insert English 111 and English 112]. [Provide participants with Venn Diagrams]. Focus only on the [insert the word “feature” or “characteristic”]--[insert name of feature or characteristic]--based upon your own experience placing essays with your partner. Working with your evaluation partner, describe--on the Venn Diagram--how you and your partner have perceived this [insert the word “feature” or “characteristic”] as a placement indicator for both [insert English 110 and 111 or English 111 and English 112] when the placement categories or circles overlap. Then please describe how
this [insert the word “feature” or “characteristic”] is different in the outer placement categories or circles. In a few minutes, I will ask partners (if applicable) to present and describe their Venn Diagrams, and I will allow time for any follow up comments.

**Activity #3**

While making placement decisions, several placement readers have noted the sophistication of the introductory and concluding paragraphs of placement essays. In this activity, describe some qualities or characteristics of introductory and concluding paragraphs of placement essays you and your partner have placed into the placement category [insert English 110S, English 110, English 111, or English 112] in a list. [Provide the participants with a list with the following headings: [Insert Placement Category--English 110S, English 110, English 111, or English 112], Qualities of Introductory Paragraphs, and Qualities of Concluding Paragraphs.] In a few minutes, I will ask partners (if applicable) to present and discuss their lists.

**Activity #4**

While making placement decisions, several placement readers have noted [insert “the feature(s)” or “the evaluative issue(s)”] [insert name of feature(s) or evaluative issue(s)]. In this activity, describe the qualities or characteristics of [insert name of feature(s) or evaluative issue(s)] for the placement category [insert English 110S, English 110, English 111, or English 112] in a list. Please list qualities or characteristics of [insert “this/these feature(s)” or “this/these evaluative issue(s)”] in placement essays you and/or your evaluation partner placed into the placement category [insert English 110S, English 110, English 111, or English 112] in a list. In a few minutes, I will ask partners (if applicable) to present and discuss their lists.
Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in a study concerning your experience teaching English 110, English 111, and/or English 112 students in the General Studies Writing Program (GSW) at Bowling Green State University (BGSU). As part of my graduate work in the Department of Rhetoric and Writing at BGSU, I am conducting a study involving placement evaluators (including administrators and teaching assistants) who will participate in the GSW 2006 Placement Program.

Your participation will help me identify students' writing skills in each GSW class; this information will help me study the individual placement categories—English 110, English 111, and English 112. This study is part of my dissertation work on the rhetorical values of GSW placement evaluators. The main purpose of the research project for my dissertation will be to identify and analyze rhetorical values that guide placement evaluators in placing students into one of GSW’s writing courses, English 110, English 111, or English 112, during the GSW 2006 Placement Program this summer.

My study may benefit GSW’s Placement Program; my study may help the GSW Director, Placement Coordinator, Assistant Placement Coordinator, and Placement Evaluators determine the effectiveness of the Placement Program’s placement materials, training sessions, and articulation of the program’s entrance-level criteria and rhetorical values, and consequently, validate and/or revise placement practices and values. You may obtain a summary of the results of this study upon request.

Your participation will involve one videotaped and audio taped group interview during the summer 2006 session. This “one” group interview will last approximately 60 minutes. This study will also require you to submit any materials you create during the interview.

The anticipated risks to you are not greater than those normally encountered in everyday life. However, you may possibly become anxious thinking about this group interview; should this situation occur, you would be referred to counseling services.

Your confidentiality as a participant and your contributions during the interview will be protected throughout the study and publication of study results. Your identity will not be revealed in any published results unless you specifically request identification. In addition,
videotapes, audio tapes, computer files, typed transcripts, and any other materials will be stored in a secure, locked environment.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you can refrain from answering any or all questions without penalty or explanation. You are free to withdraw consent and to discontinue participation at any time. Your decision to participate will not impact your teaching status or assignment or your relationship to the institution in any way.

If you have any questions or comments about this study, you can contact me at (419) 372-0338 or email me at sweric@bgnet.bgsu.edu. You may also contact Dr. Richard Gebhardt, my dissertation chair, at (419) 372-7212 or email him at richgeb@bgnet.bgsu.edu. If you have any questions about the conduct of this study and your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Chair of Bowling Green State University’s Human Subjects Review Board at (419) 372-7716 (hsrb@bgnet.bgsu.edu).

By signing, dating, and returning this form, you are indicating your consent to participate in this project. A copy of this consent document will be provided to you upon request.

Your signature:_____________________________________________ Date:______________
Questions for Group Interview with GSW Instructors  
2006 GSW Instructor Participants

In this interview, instructors who are teaching (or who have taught) English 110, 111, and 112 will create maps and discuss them. First, two groups will work on two separate activities. I will read each set of instructions to each group. Then the two groups will come back together to answer one interview question about their maps in the final activity. This interview will take approximately 60 minutes. Brackets denote information for the principal researcher (e.g. research questions) and/or information that will be coded and inserted from the data.

Group 1 Activity

[Supporting Research Questions 1 and 2]  
**Instructions to Participants:** Since everyone has recently taught English 112 (or is currently teaching English 112 this summer), I would first like to ask you to identify the skills students possessed upon entering and exiting English 112 in the last section that you taught. For instance, when your course began last spring or fall, what specific writing skills did students appear to have when they entered your class on the first day, and what skills did they obtain to pass the course? To answer this question, I would like you to draw a map of the “range” of students’ writing skills on one of the provided transparencies. Please focus on students’ “real” writing skills—skills they actually possessed—rather than “ideal” skills or skills you wished they possessed. Please be creative; your map can include words, drawings, clusters, lists, or anything else you like. Please take a few to brainstorm and create your maps, and then each person will present and describe his/her map. In particular, explain the key terms and/or describe the significance of the graphics in the maps. This activity will take approximately 20 minutes.

Group 2 Activity

[Supporting Research Questions 1 and 2]  
**Instructions to Participants:** Since everyone has taught English 110 or English 111, I would like to ask you to identify the skills students possessed upon entering and exiting your 110 or 111 course. If you have previously taught English 110, identify students’ skills only in this course. Likewise, if you have only previously taught English 111, identify the students’ skills in this course. To answer this question, I would like you to draw a map of the “range” of students’ “real” writing skills on one of the provided transparencies. Again, please focus on students’ “real” writing skills—skills they actually possessed—rather than “ideal” skills or skills you wished they possessed. Please be creative; your map can include words, drawings, clusters, lists, or anything else you like. Please take a few to brainstorm and create your maps, and then each person will present and describe his/her map. In particular, explain the key terms and/or describe the significance of the graphics in the maps. This activity will take approximately 20 minutes.

Activity for Groups 1 and 2

[Supporting Research Questions 1 and 2]
Instructions to Participants: Now let’s discuss your maps together. Individually or as a group, answer the following question: “To what extent does your map reflect what skills students “should” have possessed in your English 110, English 111, or English 112 class—as depicted in your map? In other word, describe how students’ “real” writing skills compare to students’ “ideal” writing skills. This activity will take approximately 20 minutes.
2006 BGSU Student Participants

Placement Essay
Consent Email

[Information in brackets will be inserted later or denotes information for the researcher.]

[Title of Consent Email: GSW Placement Essay Request]

Department of English
212 East Hall
Bowling Green State University
Bowling Green, OH 43403-0191
Phone: (419) 372-2576
Fax: (419) 372-0333

From: Eric Stalions

To: [Insert Student’s Full Name]

[Insert Date]

Dear [Insert Student’s First Name],

I am writing to ask you to allow me to include the placement essay you wrote for BGSU’s General Studies Writing (GSW) Program in my dissertation study. If you give me permission, I may reprint your entire placement essay and/or parts of your essay in my dissertation.

As part of my doctoral graduate work in the Department of Rhetoric and Writing at BGSU, I am conducting a study about the process of how GSW placement essays are evaluated. As a result, I would like to use your placement essay as an example of the kind of essay that is written for the GSW Program and gets scored.

If you allow me to include your placement essay in my dissertation, your name and identity will not be revealed unless you specifically request identification. Your confidentiality will be protected in any publication of my study, and your essay will be stored in a secure, locked environment.

If you allow me to include your placement essay in my dissertation study, please reply to this email, and type—“You may reprint my essay”—in your email message. However, do not reply to this email if you are younger than 18 years old. You must be 18 years old or older to give me permission to reprint your entire placement essay and/or parts of your essay in my dissertation.

Please email me if you have any questions at sweric@bgnet.bgsu.edu. In addition, please feel free to contact Dr. Richard Gebhardt, my dissertation advisor, at richgeb@bgnet.bgsu.edu, if you have any questions.
Finally, my request is in compliance with the policies of the Human Subjects Review Board. If you have any questions about my request, you may contact the Chair of Bowling Green State University’s Human Subjects Review Board at (419) 372-7716 (hsrb@bgsu.edu).

By replying to this email and typing--“You may reprint my essay”--in your email message, you are indicating your consent to allow me to reprint your GSW placement essay and that you are 18 years old or older.

Sincerely,
Eric Stalions
Former and Current GSW Instructors

Participant Consent Email and Questionnaire

[Information in brackets will be inserted later or denotes information for the researcher.]

>Title of Email: Ten-Minute Email Questionnaire

Department of English
212 East Hall
Bowling Green State University
Bowling Green, OH 43403-0191
Phone: (419) 372-2576
Fax: (419) 372-0333

From: Eric Stalions

To: [Insert Participant’s Full Name]

[Insert Date]

Dear [Insert Participant’s First Name],

You are invited to participate in a study concerning your experience teaching English 110, English 111, and/or English 112 students in the General Studies Writing Program (GSW) at Bowling Green State University (BGSU).

Your participation will help me identify students’ writing skills in each GSW class; this information will help me study the individual placement categories—English 110, English 111, and English 112. This study is part of my dissertation work on the rhetorical values of GSW placement evaluators. As part of my graduate work in the Department of Rhetoric and Writing at BGSU, I am analyzing the rhetorical values that guided placement evaluators in placing students into one of GSW’s writing courses, English 110, English 111, or English 112, during the GSW 2006 Placement Program this summer.

My study may benefit GSW’s Placement Program; my study may help the GSW Director, Placement Coordinator, Assistant Placement Coordinator, and Placement Evaluators determine the effectiveness of the Placement Program’s placement materials, training sessions, and articulation of the program’s entrance-level criteria and rhetorical values, and consequently, validate and/or revise placement practices and values. You may obtain a summary of the results of this study upon request.

Specifically, your participation will involve completing the email questionnaire below. You would only spend ten minutes completing this questionnaire.
The anticipated risks to you are not greater than those normally encountered in everyday life. However, you may possibly become anxious thinking about this questionnaire; should this situation occur, you would be referred to counseling services.

Your confidentiality as a participant and your contributions to my study will be protected throughout the study and publication of study results. Your identity will not be revealed in any published results unless you specifically request identification.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you can refrain from answering any or all questions without penalty or explanation. You are free to withdraw consent at any time. Your decision to participate will not impact your teaching status or assignment or your relationship to the institution in any way.

If you have any questions or comments about this study, you can contact me at (419) 372-6864 or email me at sweric@bgnet.bgsu.edu. You may also contact Dr. Richard Gebhardt, my dissertation chair, at (419) 372-7212 or email him at richgeb@bgnet.bgsu.edu. If you have any questions about the conduct of this study and your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Chair of Bowling Green State University’s Human Subjects Review Board at (419) 372-7716 (hsrc@bgnet.bgsu.edu).

By completing this questionnaire and replying to this email, you are indicating your consent to participate in this study.

Sincerely,
Eric Stalions

******************************************************************************

Questionnaire

Instructions: Please answer one, two, or three of the questions below. Only answer questions concerning GSW classes that you have already taught. For instance, if you have only taught English 111, only respond to the second question. Answer all three questions only if you have taught English 110, English 111, and English 112. For each question, please identify and define one writing skill. For example, according to the Simon & Schuster Handbook for Writers, students’ proficiency with “syntax” may refer to their ability to create “sentence variety” by varying the “lengths” and “structures” of sentences (347).

Please spend only ten minutes responding to this questionnaire, and please number your responses.

1. In your opinion, what is the most important writing skill students should possess upon entering English 110? Identify and define this writing skill. Please respond to this question if you have taught English 110.
2. In your opinion, what is the most important writing skill students should possess upon entering English 111? Identify and define this writing skill. Please respond to this question if you have taught English 111.

3. In your opinion, what is the most important writing skill students should possess upon entering English 112? Identify and define this writing skill. Please respond to this question if you have taught English 112.
APPENDIX I: SAMPLE ESSAYS

English 110 Placement Essay

I personally believe that the problem is bigger then just incoming students not being able to budget there money, I believe that it has to do with were the money came from. How did they get the money? Did they work for it or was it just given to them by there parents where there was no limits? These ways to money can create good or bad habits for future college students.

Habits are set at young ages in a persons life good or bad. Budgeting money is a good habit that needs to be started at a young age way before a student enters his or her college years. Most young students money has just been given to them by there parents to be spratically dispersed on any random valuables. The problem is once this habit begins it is hard to break but there are ways to prevent it.

The best way to perhaps make college students more responsible with there money is making them earn the money they spend themselves way before college. By having students start as early as there freshman year in highschool working for there money will train them to budget and prepare them for the responsibilities of being independent. When the student reaches college hopefully he or she will have also saved and budgeted in advance for the expenses of the college life.

Making students work for there money will most likely also help improve their grades. By working it teaches students how manage their time wisely. For instance mabe a student would stay in and study rather then blow their hard earned cash on an activity with his or her friends. I also believe if a student works at a hard labor job such as in a factory, they will be motivated to work harded in school so they will not have to return.

Taking ones own expenses into their own hands is a big responsibility that adults are faced with in every day life. If we instill this habit of responsibility with money in students at a younger age it will push them to be more careful with there time and money in the future.

Therefore I believe that preparation is the biggest key to solving this problem. As long as students are prepared to work for and not waste there money budgeting should just come natural. In the end I believe all this will also make you a more successful person in the real world because of your good habits with money.

English 111 Placement Essay

When young adults go to college, they see this as a new freedom. This of course is usually focused on those that just get out of high school. When students go off to college they don't have their parents to look over them anymore, they're free to spend their money as they please, and may have more needs to tend to now that they are on their own.

First off, almost all parents know how to manage their budget. Parents always want their child to do well in life, so by setting their child’s budget throughout the years they hope that their child can keep that ability to know they have a budget even when they go to college. Though most students see this new freedom as a way to break free from parents rule, be their own person, and spend money since it is their own. So then most young adults don’t realize that their parents were trying to help them, and keep them from going into debt later in life.

So as the young adults finally get their hands on money that no one can tell them how to spend, they start to spend too much of their money without seeing the consequences. They spend their money on clothes that aren't needed, beer, parties, and whatever their minds may fancy at any given moment. When the young adult gets a credit card, they may not exactly know the full extent of what that means. They spend money like mad, to later realize they can't pay the bill because they spent more money than they actually had and go into bankruptcy. Kim Clark believes that some of the things that drain the money are caused by big plans, and this is true. Young adults want to go to more places; they don't want to stay in the same place do the same things day after day. So some may go out and buy cars, rent apartments (instead of staying in dorms), and whatever their plan may consist of. This constricts their money, and then instead of doing what they please they get tied down to only enjoying what they can at a cheaper cost.

Yes, it's true that once they leave their parents these young adults have more costs in which they will have to tend to, but with the heavy spending of other things they lose money. So as these new costs and the costs of unnecessary things collide, the only thing that comes from it is bankruptcy. The young adult starts failing to pay rent, they can't keep themselves healthy, and then the young adult starts to miss out on things that they could have done just because they don't have the money just because they couldn't realize their parents were right all along.

A budget is something everyone needs. When young adults go off to college they need to see that, the budgets that their parents set was to help them realize they needed a budget in their lives no matter where they go. A young adult with a budget never has to beg for money because they know what they have, they buy the essentials, and then if they have enough for what they want they get it. There are always those young adults that don't think of their budget and splurge on whatever they choose without consideration of essentials, and this is why so many students these days have problems with money.
English 112 Placement Essay

A subject that all college students pass or fail is how to budget money wisely. Kim Clark takes a look at the issue in the article “Econ 101: College is Time to Budget”. Unfortunately, many students arrive on campus unaware of how to use their money wisely when it comes to nonacademic spending. There are several solutions that can be taken before students come to college and while they are at college to better prepare themselves on handling their money effectively.

First, it all starts at home. Clark explains that some 79 percent of college students have never talked to their parents about a budget. The parents are responsible for teaching their children how to handle money wisely. If the parents spend their money without thinking, the bad habits will most likely be passed down to their children. I know from first-hand experience that children learn from their parents because I have parents who put everything on credit cards, and even go so far as to pay bills with other credit cards. Where does the debt end for them? They probably don't even know. They also never sat down with me to go over a budget and teach me how to spend wisely until I was already thousands of dollars in debt for a credit card I received after signing up for one only because I wanted a free hat.

Another important step is to start early when it comes to teaching how to budget. Parents could teach their high school age students that it is important to get a job if they want to have cell phones, clothes, movies, etc., and the value of working could be a lesson carried into the college years. As Clark mentions, the students need to learn to be responsible. It is as easy as working fifteen hours a week to earn the extra spending money that one desires. My cousins are good examples of students who work and know how to budget. My aunt made sure that they worked if they wanted a car. They are all in college now with jobs to support their extracurricular activities. None of them have fallen prey to the credit card vendors who set up camp around campus.

The next option is for parents to allow their high school students to use a credit card, but only with strict limitations. (This choice should be for the disciplined parents and student.) The credit card should be in the parents’ name. There should be a low spending limit so there are no high-end purchases, such as a $900 purse, or $600 iPod. Also, the student should be responsible for paying off the credit card. When this is done, the student quickly learns how interest and minimum payments work (and how they can also harm). Hopefully, the student will learn the importance of keeping good credit, and how, in the end, it will be cheaper to pay with cash instead of plastic.

Next, as Kim suggests, the students and parents need to sit down and discuss a realistic budget for college spending. Upperclassmen and their parents would know this information best. Perhaps they could speak with older friends who have been in college and know the ins and outs of spending. Research should also be done by both the parents and students to find out just how much can be spent on nonacademic items. Helping the student purchase books and furnish their rooms is one thing, but when it comes to nonacademic purchases, the students should learn to be more responsible. When they find out how much money they need per month, they will be more interested in finding a job when they get to campus. It is the responsibility of the parents to make sure their children value each and every dollar that they earn. Not only will the students be wise on how they spend their money, they will also value the purchases they do make.

All of these solutions are easy to implement in the home while the student is in high school. They are also positive lessons that can be carried on through life and not only in the college years. If the lessons are learned early, then the student should be smart enough to take that knowledge with them into college. Knowledge is the key. Parents need to share their knowledge with their children. Teach them how to spend and save wisely. Teach them the importance of working for what they desire. And most important, teach them how to budget. Who knows? Maybe someday credit card vendors on campus will be a thing of the past.
APPENDIX J: CRITERIA FOR PLACEMENT

Only experienced instructors of GSW courses are selected to serve as placement evaluators. Through their prior experience in the program, they have become familiar with the GSW rubric, a detailed assessment tool listing key indicators of quality in academic writing, and have used it when grading their students’ essays. Experience with the GSW rubric gives placement essay evaluators several advantages:

- a strong sense of the key indicators of quality in academic writing
- an enhanced ability to discriminate between various levels of performance
- a shared vocabulary for discussing placement criteria and decisions

However, even though familiarity with the elements listed on the rubric provides necessary background knowledge for placement evaluators, the rubric and the grading standards that accompany it are not directly applicable to the placement process. This is because, in their GSW courses, instructors use the rubric to record their largely analytical judgment of the student’s work when measured against specific grading criteria. Grading criteria reflect exit-level standards. In contrast, when making placement decisions, placement evaluators use a different tool (the Placement Note Sheet) to record their largely holistic judgment of the student’s work when measured against entrance-level criteria.

The following several pages describe entrance-level criteria for each GSW course. These criteria are closely aligned with the skills taught in each course (as described earlier in this handbook).

Features Suggesting ENG 110S Placement

Very few students who attend BGSU place in 110S. In fact, 110S is a placement category, not a separate class or course of study, and those who place in this category are simply flagged for special attention. Students whose writing is at the English 110S level are placed in regular sections of English 110, and instructors are notified so that they can provide the students with individualized attention. Students also receive letters from the Writing Center encouraging them to take advantage of the tutoring services available to them.

Students are designated for English 110S if their placement essays exhibit one or more of the following characteristics:

- Severe sentence problems—more than 5 ineffective fragments, fused sentences, or extremely awkward structures in about 400 words
- Severe grammar, usage, or mechanics problems—more than 15 different errors in about 400 words
- A severe problem in one specific area, such as spelling or word choice, which will require intensive, individualized instruction.
Features Suggesting ENG 110 Placement

In recent years, about 12-15% of incoming first-year students place into ENG 110. Students are placed in English 110 if their placement essays exhibit one or more of the following characteristics:

- No awareness of intended audience
- No concept of essay structure—introduction, body, and/or conclusion
- Severe coherence problems
- Little development of ideas with reasons, illustrations, or specific examples
- Serious sentence problems—3 to 5 fragments or fused sentences in about 400 words
- Numerous other sentence problems—more than 5 comma splices, unclear sentences, and/or awkward sentences in about 400 words
- Little or no sentence variety
- Weak word choice—more than 8 incorrectly used content and/or function words, idiomatic expressions, or unclear referents in about 400 words
- Weak mechanics/grammar/usage—more than 8 but fewer than 15 different errors in about 400 words

Features Suggesting ENG 111 Placement

In recent years, about 70-76% of incoming first-year students place into ENG 111. Students are placed in English 111 if their placement essay exhibits an overall sense of structure, offers at least some supporting details, and demonstrates at least a moderate degree of control in sentence structure and mechanics. However, English 111 placement essays also exhibit one or more of the following weaknesses:

- Little awareness of intended audience
- Lack of credibility in information or argument
- Inappropriate tone
- Illogical shifts in point of view or tense
- Unclear or unfocused thesis
- Problems with coherence
- Problems expressing ideas clearly and concisely
- Weak transitions within or between paragraphs
- Weakly developed introduction and/or conclusion
- Weakly developed body paragraphs
- Repetition of thesis in place of specific reasons, examples, or illustrations
- 1 or 2 ineffective fragments, run-ons, or non-standard structures in about 400 words
- 3 or 4 comma splices, awkward sentences, or unclear sentences in about 400 words
- 3 to 8 incorrectly used content words, function words, idiomatic expressions, or unclear referents in about 400 words
- 5 to 8 different errors in grammar, usage, or mechanics in about 400 words
Features Suggesting ENG 112 Placement

In recent years, about 12-15% of incoming first-year students place into 112. To be placed in English 112, students need not write “perfect” placement essays. In fact, 112-level placement essays may contain a few elements of “incorrectness,” such as a few comma splices, some spelling errors, and/or a few problems in grammar, mechanics, or usage. As well, 112-level placement essays may not contain all elements of effective academic argument, such as counterargument. However, 112-level placement essays generally exhibit many of the following characteristics:

- Generally effective awareness of the intended readers
- Some evidence of critical thinking
- Credible information or argument
- Appropriate, effective, and consistent tone
- Consistent and logical point of view and tense
- Clear, focused thesis
- Coherence within paragraphs and the essay as a whole
- Generally effective transitions and metadiscourse
- Logical essay structure, with an introduction, a body that develops the thesis, and a conclusion
- Generally well-developed introduction and conclusion
- Generally well-developed paragraphs, with main ideas supported by appropriate reasons and/or specific examples
- Generally error-free syntax
- Effective sentence variety
- Generally accurate, effective word choice
- Generally error-free grammar, usage, or mechanics

Source:

General Studies Writing Program Rubric  
Bowling Green State University

Instructor Evaluation

Student: ____________________________  Instructor: ____________________________

Date: ____________________________  Evaluation: ____________________________

Type of paper: ____________________________  Paper #: ____________________________

Instructor, please check one: This paper was submitted as ___ a first draft ___ a final draft ___ a revision of a final draft

Notations in parentheses refer to chapters and sections in the Simon & Schuster Handbook for Writers, 8th ed.

I. Audience: This essay clearly demonstrates an awareness of its intended readers.

- Appropriateness of audience addressed (1c)
- Point of view:
  - Strategy toward audience (1b.3, 5i–j)
- Credibility:
  - Information:
  - Argument (6)
- Tone (1d, 5k)

II. Organization/Theme/Structure: This essay has a clear structure appropriate to its thesis and subject—and to instructor's assignment.

- Thesis:
- Logical organizational pattern:
- Metadiscourse:
  - Transitions (3g.1)
  - Transitional paragraphs (3j)
  - Other coherence techniques (3g.2–5)
  - Other:

III. Development: The various phases of the essay are fully developed.

- Introduction (3b)
- Body paragraphs (5c)
- Unity (3c–e)
- Topic sentences (3e)
- Detailed support (3f–g)
- Rhetorical strategy (3h)
- Conciseness/unnecessary repetition
- Conclusion (3k)

- Other:

IV. Syntax: The sentences of this essay are generally free of errors and appropriately varied.

- ESL difficulties (44–51)
- Unintentional fragments (12)
- Run-on sentences (13)
- Comma splices (13)
- Lack of variety in length/style (19)
- Other:

- Dangling/misplaced modifiers (14)
- Inflated/wordy structures (16)
- Ineffective passives (16c)
- Mismatched constructions (15f–j)
- Problems with coordination/subordination (17)
- Non-parallel structures (18)
- Euphemisms (21i)

V. Word Choice: The words in this essay are chosen with accuracy and with attention to style.

- Vague/unclear words (21e–f)
- Slang/Regionalisms/Dialects/Jargon (21h, 21j)
- Idiomatic expressions (7h, 49)
- Other:

- Unclear references (9f–g)
- Biased/dehumanizing sexist word choice (21g)

VI. Usage/Mechanics: This essay demonstrates a sound control of conventional usage and mechanics.

- Errors in grammar/usage:
- End punctuation (23)
- Commas (24)
- Apostrophes (27)
- Semicolons/_colons (25, 26)
- Contractions (27d)
- Numbers (30–50)
- Suffixes in person/number (15b)
- Abbreviations (30–f)
- Errors in spelling/homonyms (22)
- Parentheses/brackets (29b, 29c)
- Ellipses (41b)
  - Other:

Errors in MLA Multi-Document Format:
- Quotation conventions (28)
- Parenthetical citation (340–c)
- Works Cited (34d)
- General page format (34e.2)
- Margins
- Heading
- Indentation
- Line Spacing
English 110—Developmental Writing—Five Credit-Hours

ENG 110 is a five-hour course designed to give students intensive instruction and practice in writing expository essays structured around the principles of academic arguments. During the term students learn “process” approaches to writing; that is, as they construct essays, their instructors assist them with the important skills entailed in prewriting, drafting, and revising. The various assignments ENG 110 students complete will give them practice in writing essays that argue a position, essays that persuade, and essays that evaluate a piece of writing.

Another portion of ENG 110 will focus on various elements of writing such as grammar/usage/mechanics, word choice, sentence construction, paragraph structure, overall essay cohesion, and audience awareness. Throughout the term, the instructor provides students with individual assistance regarding their specific areas of difficulty, with the goal of helping them develop into independent writers.

Students who pass ENG 110 advance to ENG 112. Students who do not pass ENG 110 advance to ENG 111.

English 111—Introductory Writing—Three Credit-Hours

ENG 111 is a three-hour course designed to give students instruction and practice in writing expository essays structured around the principles of academic argumentation. In ENG 111, students receive instruction and help in organizing and developing ideas, and they are given continuing practice in sentence structure and mechanics. They learn to write essays that argue a position, essays that persuade, and essays that evaluate a piece of writing.

Students who pass ENG 111 advance to ENG 112. Students who do not pass ENG 111 must repeat the course.

Specific Skills Taught in English 110 and 111

In English 110 and 111, students are introduced to the following skills through the instructor’s class plans, discussions, exercises, and essay assignments. The following six categories also constitute the criteria by which essays are evaluated with GSW’s rubric. For more information on any category, see the GSW rubric, which provides chapter numbers for the Simon & Schuster Handbook for Writers, which is a required text for all students in GSW courses.

Audience

This course will help students learn to

- Analyze the needs, expectations, and values of various audiences.
- Write to a college-educated audience in a semiformal/formal style.
- Adopt an approach to the topic which is appropriate for the audience.
- Adopt a tone which is appropriate for the topic and audience.
Choose information/arguments which are credible to the audience.
Choose language which is appropriate for the topic and the audience.
Keep the point of view consistent—shifting pronouns and/or verb tenses only where the shift is logical and necessary.

Organization/Theme/Structure

This course will help students learn to
- Focus a topic so that it is suitable for the length of the essay.
- Establish a clear thesis or sense of purpose by directly stating it or by clearly implying it.
- Use various methods of organizing information and choosing the most appropriate method according to the purpose of the essay.
- Structure effective academic arguments and counterarguments with an awareness of opposing viewpoints and the values that inform them.
- Synthesize—rather than merely refer to—the sources which are used in writing academic arguments.
- Achieve coherence within and between paragraphs.
- Use appropriate, effective transitional devices.

Development

This course will help students learn to
- Write various types of introductory paragraphs and choose the method of introduction which best suits the overall purpose and audience.
- Develop the main points suggested by the thesis of an essay completely and thoroughly by using details, examples, reasons, and/or citations from readings.
- Develop ideas logically and provide explanations wherever necessary.
- Develop ideas without unnecessary repetition.
- Write various types of concluding paragraphs that best suit the overall purpose and audience.

Syntax

This course will help students learn to
- Recognize and avoid serious sentence errors—inappropriate fragments, run-ons, comma splices, or awkward, vague, wordy, or unclear sentences.
- Vary sentences for emphasis, revising to achieve variety.
- Achieve sentence structures necessary for emphasizing and supporting the development of the thesis.

Word Choice

This course will help students learn to
- Recognize and avoid vagueness, clichés, wordiness, and repetitious word choices.
- Use words appropriately with respect to denotation and connotation.
- Make pronouns refer clearly to the appropriate referents.
**Usage/Mechanics**

This course will help students learn to
- Write essays that are mechanically sound.
- Write essays that exhibit standard English usage.
- Use acceptable manuscript conventions, including the documentation of electronic sources.

**English 112—Varieties of Writing—Three Credit-Hours**

English 112, the only academic course that is required of all students at Bowling Green State University, is designed to prepare students for the types of writing they will be expected to do in college. Therefore, the emphasis in ENG112 is on the development of critical and analytical skills that are used in both writing and reading. In order to help students develop these valuable skills, the course will assist students through the process of writing the following kinds of assignments: critiques of an academic article, argumentative essays which synthesize multiple sources, and academic researched papers.

Students who do not pass English 112 are required to re-enroll in the course.

**Specific Skills Taught in English 112**

In English 112, students are introduced to the skills outlined below; instructors plan essay assignments to help students master these skills. These six categories also constitute the criteria by which essays are evaluated. For more information on any category listed below, see the GSW rubric, which provides chapter numbers for the *Simon & Schuster Handbook for Writers*, a required text for students in all GSW courses.

**Audience**

This course will help students learn to
- Analyze the needs, expectations, and values of various audiences.
- Write to a college-educated audience in a semiformal/formal style.
- Adopt an approach to the topic which is appropriate for the audience.
- Adopt a tone which is appropriate for the topic and audience.
- Choose information/arguments which are credible to the audience.
- Choose language which is appropriate for the topic and the audience.
- Keep the point of view consistent—shifting pronouns and/or verb tenses only where the shift is logical and necessary.

**Organization/Theme/Structure**

This course will help students learn to
- Focus a topic so that it is suitable for the length of the essay.
- Establish a clear thesis or sense of purpose by directly stating it or by clearly implying it.
- Use various methods of organizing information and choose the most appropriate method according to the purpose of the essay.
- Structure effective academic arguments and counterarguments with an awareness of opposing viewpoints and the values that inform them.
- Synthesize—rather than merely refer to—the sources which are used in writing academic arguments.
- Achieve coherence within and between paragraphs.
- Use appropriate, effective transitional devices.

**Development**

This course will help students learn to
- Write various types of introductory paragraphs and choose the method of introduction which best suits their overall purpose and audience.
- Develop the main points suggested by the thesis of the essay completely and thoroughly by using details, examples, reasons, and/or citations from related readings.
- Develop ideas logically and provide explanations wherever necessary.
- Develop ideas without unnecessary repetition.
- Write various types of concluding paragraphs that best suit the overall purpose and audience.

**Syntax**

This course will help students learn to
- Recognize and avoid serious sentence errors—inappropriate fragments, run-ons, comma splices, or awkward, vague, wordy, or unclear sentences.
- Vary sentences for emphasis, revising to achieve variety.
- Achieve sentence structures necessary for emphasizing and supporting the development of the thesis.

**Word Choice**

This course will help students learn to
- Recognize and avoid vagueness, clichés, wordiness, and repetitious word choices.
- Use words appropriately with respect to denotation and connotation.
- Make pronouns refer clearly to the appropriate referents.

**Usage/Mechanics**

This course will help students learn to
- Write essays that are mechanically sound.
- Write essays that exhibit standard English usage.
- Use acceptable manuscript conventions, including the documentation of electronic sources.

**Source:**

APPENDIX M: CURRICULAR CRITERIA

ENG 110S Placement

Principal Criteria
Severe sentence problems—more than 5 ineffective fragments, fused sentences, or extremely awkward structures in about 400 words
Severe grammar, usage, or mechanics problems—more than 15 different errors in about 400 words
A severe problem in one specific area, such as spelling or word choice, which will require intensive, individualized instruction.

ENG 110 Placements

Principal Criteria
Audience: No awareness of intended audience; argument and tone issues
Organization/Theme/Structure: No concept of essay structure—introduction, body, and/or conclusion; Severe coherence problems
Development: Little development of ideas with reasons, illustrations, or specific examples
Sentence Structure: Serious sentence problems—3 to 5 fragments or fused sentences in about 400 words; Numerous other sentence problems—more than 5 comma splices, unclear sentences, and/or awkward sentences in about 400 words; Little or no sentence variety
Word Choice: Weak word choice—more than 8 incorrectly used content and/or function words, idiomatic expressions, or unclear referents in about 400 words
Grammar-Usage-Mechanics: Weak mechanics/grammar/usage—more than 8 but fewer than 15 different errors in about 400 words

Secondary Criteria
Serious Writing Problems/Weaknesses Overall: Pervasive or severe errors or weaknesses are present.
Extra Attention/Extra Time: Students may benefit from the extra two hours in English 110 to get further help with writing weaknesses, such as grammar, usage, and mechanics issues.
Source Use: Essays may begin to demonstrate source integration.

ENG 111 Placements

Principal Criteria
Audience: Little awareness of intended audience; Lack of credibility in information or argument
Inappropriate tone; Illogical shifts in point of view or tense
Organization/Theme/Structure: Unclear or unfocused thesis; Problems with coherence; Problems expressing ideas clearly and concisely; Weak transitions within or between paragraphs
Development: Weakly developed introduction and/or conclusion; Weakly developed body paragraphs; Repetition of thesis in place of specific reasons, examples, or illustrations;
Sentence Structure: 1 or 2 ineffective fragments, run-ons, or non-standard structures in about 400 words; 3 or 4 comma splices, awkward sentences, or unclear sentences in about 400 words
Word Choice: 3 to 8 incorrectly used content words, function words, idiomatic expressions, or unclear referents in about 400 words
Grammar-Usage-Mechanics: 5 to 8 different errors in grammar, usage, or mechanics in about 400 words

Secondary Criteria

Early Stages of Sophistication: Essays may begin to demonstrate sophistication.
Source Use: Essays may begin to demonstrate source integration.
Critical Thinking: Essays may begin to demonstrate critical thinking or depth of analysis.

ENG 112 Placements

Principal Criteria

Audience: Generally effective awareness of the intended readers; Some evidence of critical thinking; Credible information or argument; Appropriate, effective, and consistent tone; Consistent and logical point of view and tense
Organization/Theme/Structure: Clear, focused thesis; Coherence within paragraphs and the essay as a whole; Generally effective transitions and metadiscourse; Logical essay structure, with an introduction, a body that develops the thesis, and a conclusion
Development: Generally well-developed introduction and conclusion; Generally well-developed paragraphs, with main ideas supported by appropriate reasons and/or specific examples
Sentence Structure: Generally error-free syntax; Effective sentence variety
Word Choice: Generally accurate, effective word choice
Grammar-Usage-Mechanics: Generally error-free grammar, usage, or mechanics

Secondary Criteria

Counterargument: Essays may acknowledge opposing or different viewpoints.
Sophistication in One or More Areas: Essays may demonstrate sophistication in one or more criteria areas.
Source Use/Synthesis of Sources: Essays may synthesize sources and/or ideas for support.
Critical Thinking: Essays may demonstrate critical thinking or depth of analysis.

Note: Elements from “Appendix J: Criteria for Placement” (pp. 706-708), “Appendix K: General Studies Writing Program Rubric” (p. 709), and “Appendix L: General Studies Writing Courses” (pp. 710-713) have been integrated to define curricular criteria (with respect to the six principal curricular criteria and secondary criteria) for the purpose of comparison with placement readers’ evaluative criteria.