

Writing to Learn Summer Institute 2007: Grant Task 1.7.3

Executive Summary

The Writing to Learn Institute resulted in significant improvements in participants' self-reported knowledge and abilities related to integrating more and/or improved writing assignments into their instruction. Besides increased understanding, participants left with guidelines for planning, developing, and implementing writing assignments and assessments for their courses. Central findings are summarized as follows.

Strengths of the Activity

- Results showed significant increases in participants' ability to appreciate different roles between response and assessment in evaluating student writing and ways to prioritize responses to various writing concerns.
- Results showed significant increases in participants' knowledge of formative writing techniques/activities and different assessment procedures.
- Participants valued the opportunity to receive suggestions, assistance and handouts related to specific challenges they face in regard to student writing assignments.
- Reflecting on the 2006 Writing to Learn (WTL) Institute outcomes, the institute continues to impact participants by significantly improving their self-reported understanding/abilities related to student writing concerns and integrating more and/or improved writing assignments and assessments into their instruction.

Opportunities to Improve Future Institutes

- Tasking the institute facilitators with developing/organizing activities in a two-day sequence.
- Provide additional handouts (i.e. rubrics, in-class assignments).
- Additional focus on assignment design and informal writing assignments.

Action Plan for Current Institute

- Develop further examples/handouts as requested by participants.
- Develop follow-up activities during the academic year to support instructors' implementation of institute strategies.