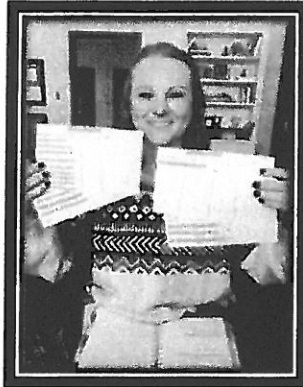# Drafting a Growth Mindset using Assessment Criteria

Identifying criteria in an assignment leads to:
Creating an assignment based on expectations leads to:
Affirming the layout of those expectations leads to:
Aligning a writer's construction of knowledge
with a professor's evaluation of that knowledge leads to:
Academic engagement and success.

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## Drafting a Growth Mindset using Assessment Criteria

Research Fellow: Jenson Swartz, History and Social Studies Certification Major

Overview: Writing papers is a common assessment in content courses in an major. We use students' writing to evaluate their understanding, yet we base our assessment on our (professor) expectations. How can students improve their academic success based on our articulation of our academic expectations?

Objectives:
Using a syllabus and/or assignment details,
- o establish a list of key criteria that is used to generate a written assignment.
- o Identify/code key criteria in a written draft to signal the layout of criteria for the benefit of affirming evidence of each criterion.
- o Showcase the growth mindset from the draft to the final stages of an assignment.
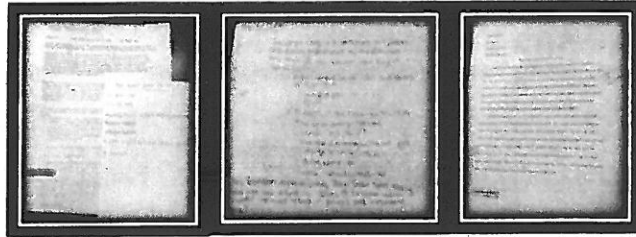
Procedure:

- Create a list all **key assignments** in a course, including due dates and assessment criteria and determine a timeline path to complete the assignment, including **staggering phases of assignment completion**.
- Create a **rubric or list of key criteria** based on information in a syllabus and information shared by a professor during class.
- **Generate a draft** of the written assignment.
- Use **color codes** (one color for each criterion) to show where **each component/criterion** is in the draft.
    - *This allows the writer to see the criteria as a whole and where more details need to be added. Also, this allows the writer to share a draft with the professor to review the criteria and gather feedback related to improving the draft for key criteria. The writer can ask, "Where in my writing can I add more details that have value for you? and What criterion (criteria) have more value in the grading scale, ie-are you looking from more comparisons and analogies or should I use more citations?"*
- **Use feedback** from the professor or peers to expand on information in the written draft. The student can take the feedback from the expert and code in a different color or added to the margins, similar to using track changes.
    - *This allows an assignment to be more than a final product, it allows for documentation of growth. Also, and perhaps more importantly, it utilizes the feedback loop. Training college students requires more than grading their outcomes, it allows for opportunities that reflect scholarship. As scholars, we write based on criteria, specifically to meet publication guidelines. Using this technique mirrors our work as scholars. We value our peers' feedback to ready our writing for publication, so too must we acknowledge explicit coding of criteria and feedback to improve writing as a means of evaluating writing.*
- One way to manage peer or professor feedback is to use a whole group strategy for providing feedback. During class, allow students to have their written assignments, ask students to identify a specific criteria, ie-topic sentence. Ask students to share with groups or with you examples of topic sentences. Provide the students with feedback, affirm the components that make an outstanding topic sentence. Ask students to revise their writing to strengthen their topic sentence and show that feedback in the margin. Move the discussion on to the next criteria in the paper and follow the same feedback loop process.
- **Submit the paper and the draft** to show how the assignment progressed from draft to final product.

Assessing the Growth Mindset:

A professor can rate/grade the student on how evidence/criteria is layout in the written assignment as well as evaluating the content information.

> *This allows the writer to see the value that the organization of constructing thought in written form has significance in an overall grade of an assignment.*

As professors we all know that some writers just get it, they have a natural style that meets our expectations, but for those students who need more clear paths toward academic success, we must help them showcase their growth, their inclusion of key criteria, as a way of acknowledging their learning. Adding an opportunity for students to submit draft assignments with final products allows the writer to show growth.

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