

GES1: Write to communicate and clarify learning - Intermediate

Research and Technology GE202x

Semester: FALL 2013

REPORT DATE: 1/8/2014

Research and Technology is a required General Education foundation course that introduces students to research design and methodology as well as to disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives of the research process. The course is geared toward second-semester freshman and sophomores, although students from all levels are represented. Students take Research and Technology after English Composition and before Capstone. As student writing is assessed at the introductory level in English Composition and the advanced level in Capstone, Research and Technology has been designated as the intermediate level.

Measurement

Writing in Research and Technology courses is assessed using the students' final research papers and the Standard Kean University Writing Rubric. The paper is a minimum of 15 typed pages and contains the students' original research on their topics. Each paper must contain an abstract, a statement of the research problem, an introduction, a literature review, a description of the method (including specification of participants, materials, and procedures), a description of results and findings, a discussion of the findings (including limitations and recommendations for future research) and a properly formatted reference page. The papers must also have properly formatted citations and adhere to the rules of Standard English grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Students are required to submit various parts of the paper throughout the semester as well as a rough draft prior to their final paper.

The Standard Kean University Writing Rubric was developed by faculty from Kean's Composition Program (see attached rubric). This rubric uses a five-point Likert scale to evaluate students' writing on genre/audience, focus, development, organization, grammar/mechanics, and revision. Since Research and Technology is considered an intermediate level course, students are expected to achieve scores of 3 or higher in each category of the rubric. As an intermediate course, the percentage of students expected to achieve this passing level was established at 80%.

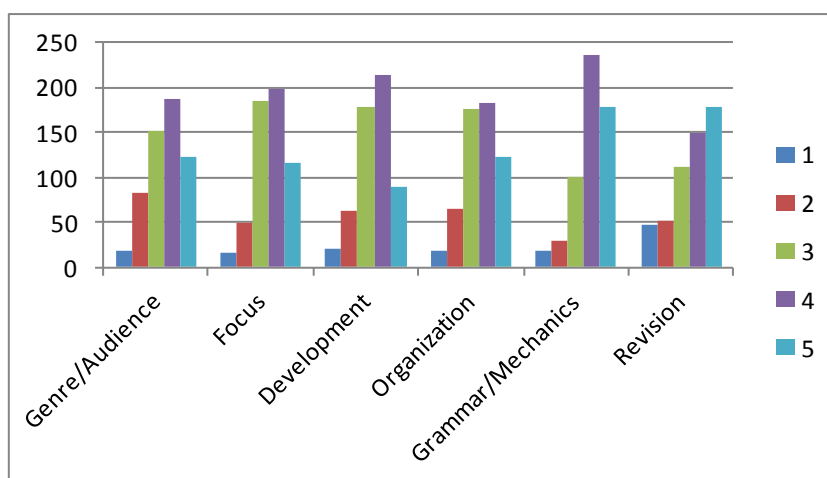
Using the Standard Kean University Writing Rubric, the writing of 581 students across all 29 sections of Research and Technology were analyzed to assess students' progress in writing.

Number of students: 581

Number of sections: 29

Mean scores overall:

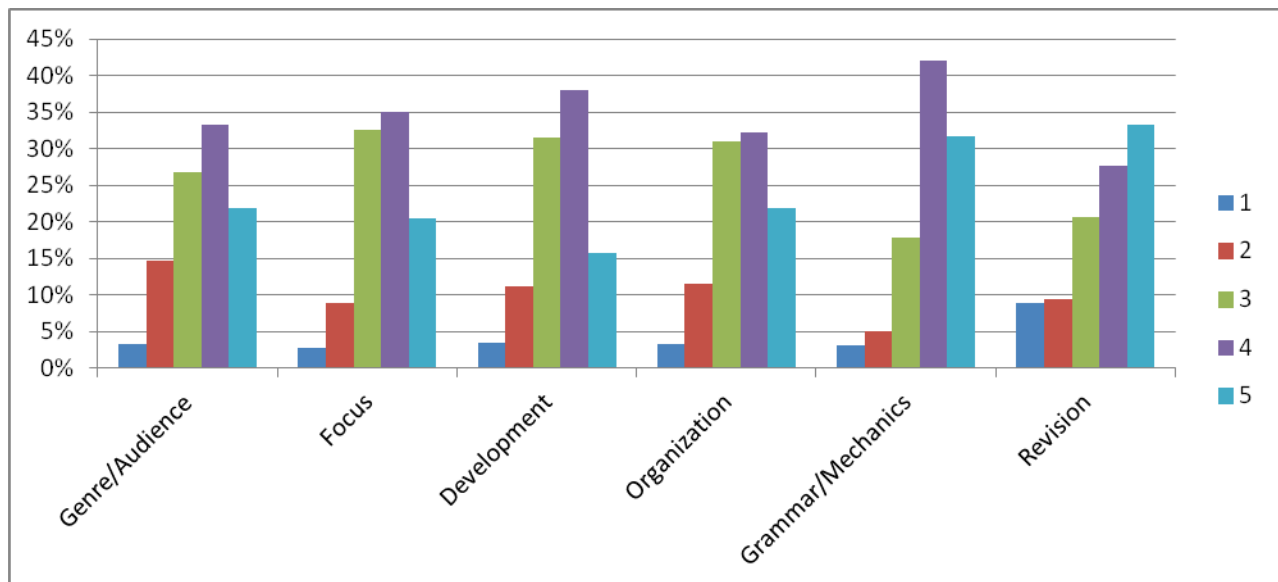
Genre/Audience	3.6
Focus	3.6
Development	3.5
Organization	3.6
Grammar/Mechanics	3.9
Revision	3.5



Distribution of Scores:
Frequency by score

	Genre/ Audience	Focus	Development	Organization	Grammar/ Mechanics	Revision
1	19	16	20	19	18	48
2	83	50	63	65	29	51
3	151	184	178	175	101	111
4	188	198	214	182	237	149
5	123	116	89	123	179	179
Total	564	564	564	564	564	538

Level	Genre/ Audience	Focus	Development	Organization	Grammar/ Mechanics	Revision
1	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%	9%
2	15%	9%	11%	12%	5%	9%
3	27%	33%	32%	31%	18%	21%
4	33%	35%	38%	32%	42%	28%
5	22%	21%	16%	22%	32%	33%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Level 1-2	18%	12%	15%	15%	8%	18%
Level 3-5 (Passing)	82%	88%	85%	85%	92%	82%



Discussion/Action/Closing the Loop:

Reviewing the data, overall mean scores average between 3.5 and 3.6 in genre/audience, focus, development, organization, and revision. The mean score for grammar and mechanics is the highest at 3.9. Ninety-two of the students met the 3-5 passing level for grammar and mechanics. This indicates that in this area, students' papers, though not error-free, did not reveal errors that are distracting or that impede meaning. In terms of focus, 88% of students met the 3-5 target, showing they are developing general and/or explicit and nuanced stances in their research papers. On the criterion of organization, the vast majority of students (85%) met the 3-5 target level. This means that students' writing is organized with an overall solid structure. In genre/audience, 82% of students achieved score levels of 3-5. This indicates they are using genre/audience in either a formulaic or more advanced way. Eighty-two percent of students also achieved level 3-5 in revision, revealing that some to all of these students made revisions improved their drafts.

Overall, writing scores were strong, though not as high in genre/audience and revision as they were in focus, development, organization, and grammar/mechanics. The percentage of students who failed to pass the expected level of 3 or higher was 18% in both genre/audience and revision indicating that this portion of students is not using conventions of genre/audience appropriately and not revising their papers as well as they could be. That said, as an intermediate level course, a skillful demonstration of genre/audience is not yet expected. It bears mention that research is a genre that many of these students have never encountered before. In the area of revision, students are expected to continue to strive to make revisions that improve the quality of their work.

With the above in mind, professors will continue to work with students to have them achieve passing levels in the aforementioned areas with special attention given to genre/audience and revision. Professors will emphasize conventions of genre/audience and meet in March 2014 to discuss curricular/pedagogical adaptations or changes and to design specific additional assignments to help students better understand genre/audience for research. Professors will also put renewed emphasis on the importance of revision and take steps to teach students how to revise properly to improve their work. Professors will meet in March 2014 to discuss curricular/pedagogical adaptations or changes to help students improve their revision skills. Specific assignments and requirements, such as having students highlight, explain, and submit all revisions, will be discussed at said meeting.

GE Writing Rubric Descriptors for Rubric: Condensed

	5	4	3	2	1	0
Genre/ Audience	Uses conventions in skillful way	Uses conventions in a somewhat skillful way	Uses conventions in formulaic way	Does not follow conventions consistently	Fails to follow most or any conventions	Not applicable
Focus	Explicit, nuanced, complex stance	Explicit and nuanced, but not complex, stance	Stance defined in general terms	Vague stance	No clear stance	Not applicable
Development	All ideas developed with specific, relevant information	Most ideas developed with specific, relevant information. Reader raise few questions	Ideas not developed consistently. Supported with vague generalization or inappropriate examples	Most ideas not developed or supported with inappropriate examples	Ideas stated, not developed	Not applicable
Organization	Structure imparts feeling of wholeness and skill	Structure imparts a feeling of wholeness but not skill	Structure breaks down in some places, though solid overall	Structure feels rough or unclear	Structure clear or confusing	Not applicable
Grammar/ Mechanics	Few or no errors exist; those present have no effect on reading	Errors obvious but not distracting	Errors begin with interfere with reading	Several distracting errors or multiple patterns of error	Numerous errors make understanding text difficult or impossible	Not applicable
Revision	Almost all revisions make draft stronger	Most revisions make draft stronger.	Some revisions strengthen, but some weaken draft	Few revisions, with little effect on quality	Very few revisions; may make final worse	No evidence of revision