

Appendix 3a: Writing Development Surveys

This is the full version of the writing development survey questions. An abbreviated version appears in appendix 3 of the print version of the book.

Instructions to students: Thank you for participating in this survey. Please answer the following questions about your experiences with writing. There are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions, so please choose the response options that most closely reflect your beliefs and experiences.

An asterisk (*) indicates questions that appeared in both entry and exit surveys.

ENTRY SURVEY QUESTIONS

The first set of questions was designed in-house. Students chose responses to the following set of questions on a scale from 1 to 4, with 1 indicating “very much” or “a lot” and 4 indicating “never” or “not at all.”

***How often did you do the following writing tasks in high school? (Exit survey version: How frequently did you do the following over the course of your college career?)**

- Write a five-paragraph essay. (1)
- Write a sustained and detailed argument of more than five pages in length. (2)
- Summarize the main ideas from an assigned reading. (3)
- Evaluate and respond critically to an assigned reading. (4)
- Make an argument and support it using evidence. (5)
- Express a personal opinion on an issue. (6)
- Interpret a literary text. (7)
- Write essays or papers in subjects other than English. (8)
- Write a personal narrative. (9)

How often did you use the following writing processes during high school?

- Revise an essay multiple times. (1)
- Follow citation guidelines. (2)
- Provide and receive feedback on peer writing. (3)
- Conduct library research. (4)
- Conduct research using online databases or other web-based sources. (5)
- Identify credible research sources. (6)
- Compose or revise online. (7)
- Create a portfolio of your writing. (8)

***How much did you learn about the following in your First-Year Writing Requirement course? (Exit survey version: How much did you learn about the following in your courses at the university?)**

- Producing well-supported academic arguments (1)
- Reading and using complex texts to create and support your argument (2)
- Writing in a variety of different genres (3)
- Shaping writing for different audiences and purposes (4)
- Revising, editing, and proofreading writing over multiple drafts (5)
- Giving and receiving feedback on writing-in-progress (6)
- Knowing how to approach new kinds of writing tasks (7)

How frequently do you use what you learned in your First-Year Writing Requirement course about the following when writing for other courses?

- Producing well-supported academic arguments (1)
- Reading and using complex texts to create and support your argument (2)
- Writing in a variety of different genres (3)
- Shaping writing for different audiences and purposes (4)
- Revising, editing, and proofreading writing over multiple drafts (5)
- Giving and receiving feedback on writing-in-progress (6)
- Knowing how to approach new kinds of writing tasks (7)

***When you need to do a kind of writing task you've never done before, how prepared do you feel to decide:**

- What the writing task is asking you to do (1)
- What kind of examples or evidence you should use (2)
- How to structure or organize your writing (3)
- What kind of vocabulary or terminology you should use (4)
- What tone or level of formality you should use (5)
- How and whether to incorporate visuals or other media into your writing (6)
- Where to go for help with this new writing task (7)

***Do you write for any of the following extracurricular activities? Mark all that apply.**

- Paid employment (1)
- Internship (2)
- Political campaign work (3)
- Activist or advocacy work (4)
- Faith-based activities (5)
- Recreation or hobbies (6)
- Fan activities (e.g., fan fiction, sports blogs, etc.) (7)
- Creative writing (8)
- Personal writing (e.g., journaling) (9)
- Other (please specify) (10) _____
- I don't do any extracurricular writing (11)

*If you marked any of the above, please describe the kinds of writing you do for these activities.

***How important do you believe writing will be for the following? (Exit survey version: How important do you believe writing has been for the following?)**

- Your undergraduate academic success at the University of Michigan (1)
- Your admission into the graduate or professional program of your choice (2)
- Your ability to achieve your long-term academic goals (3)
- Your ability to enter your chosen career field (4)
- Your ability to achieve your long-term career goals (5)
- Your ability to change careers or pursue new opportunities (6)

In the last four years, what kind of writing has been most important to you, and why? (Free response)

***Do you experience difficulties with any of the following in your academic writing? Please check all that apply.**

- Adapting how you write for different academic disciplines (1)
- Adapting your writing to different genres (2)
- Appropriately placing thesis statements (3)
- Argumentative structure (4)
- Avoiding abstract, indirect language (5)
- Coming up with a topic or idea to write about (6)
- Constructing an argument using appropriate evidence (7)
- General English syntax (8)
- Having a vocabulary for talking about writing (9)
- Integrating and citing sources effectively (10)
- Knowing where to get feedback on drafts (11)
- Narrowing or focusing the paper topic (12)
- Presenting quantitative data in a piece of writing (13)
- Providing enough development or depth of argument (14)
- Punctuation (15)
- Register (e.g., appropriate degrees of formality, slang, etc.) (16)
- Revising a paper through multiple drafts (17)
- Stating a clear, confident position (18)
- Subject-verb agreement (19)
- Use of articles (20)
- Use of pronouns (21)
- Using transitions effectively (22)
- Using visual effectively in writing (23)
- Verb tenses (24)
- Word choice or vocabulary (25)
- Writing clear, cohesive paragraphs (26)
- Writing effective thesis statements (27)
- Writing in a variety of different media (28)
- No significant issues (29)
- Other (please specify) (30) _____

The following questions come from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). Students chose their responses on a scale from 1 to 4, with 1 indicating “very often” and 4 indicating “never.”

***In your experience at your institution during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following?**

- Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions (1)
- Made a class presentation (2)
- Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in (3)
- Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources (4)
- Included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or writing assignments (5)
- Come to class without completing readings or assignments (6)
- Worked with other students on projects during class (7)
- Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments (8)
- Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions (9)
- Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary) (10)
- Participated in a community-based project (e.g., service learning) as part of a regular course (11)
- Used an electronic medium (listserv, chat group, internet, instant messaging, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment (12)
- Used email to communicate with an instructor (13)
- Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor (14)
- Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor (15)
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class (16)
- Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance (17)
- Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor’s standards or expectations (18)
- Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student life activities, etc.) (19)
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, coworkers, etc.) (20)
- Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own (21)
- Had serious conversations with students who are very different from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values (22)

***During the current school year, how much has your coursework emphasized the following mental activities?**

- Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods from your courses and readings so you can repeat them in pretty much the same form (1)
- Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components (2)

Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships (3)

Making judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods, such as examining how others gathered and interpreted data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions (4)

Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations (5)

***During the current school year, about how much reading and writing have you done?**

Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings (1)

Number of books read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment (2)

Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more (3)

Number of written papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages (4)

Number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages (5)

***In a typical week, how many homework problem sets do you complete?**

Number of problem sets that take you more than an hour to complete (1)

Number of problem sets that take you less than an hour to complete (2)

***Mark the box that best represents the extent to which your examinations during the current school year have challenged you to do your best work.**

1 (Very little) (1)

2 (2)

3 (3)

4 (4)

5 (5)

6 (6)

7 (Very much) (7)

***During the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following?**

Attended an art exhibit, play, dance, music, theater, or other performance (1)

Exercised or participated in physical fitness activities (2)

Participated in activities to enhance your spirituality (worship, meditation, prayer, etc.) (3)

Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue (4)

Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective (5)

Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept (6)

***Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate from your institution?**

Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment (1)

Community service or volunteer work (2)

Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together (3)

Work on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements (4)

Foreign language coursework (5)

Study abroad (6)

Independent study or self-designed major (7)

Culminating senior experience (Capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, etc.) (8)

***Mark the box that best represents the quality of your relationships with people at your institution.**

Relationships with other students (1)

Relationships with faculty members (2)

Relationships with administrative personnel and offices (3)

***About how many hours do you spend in a typical seven-day week doing each of the following?**

Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, doing homework or lab work, analyzing data, rehearsing, and other academic activities) (1)

Working for pay on campus (2)

Working for pay off campus (3)

Participating in cocurricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.) (4)

Relaxing and socializing (watching TV, partying, etc.) (5)

Providing care for dependents living with you (parents, children, spouse, etc.) (6)

Commuting to class (driving, walking, etc.) (7)

***To what extent does your institution emphasize each of the following?**

Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work (1)

Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically (2)

Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds (3)

Helping you cope with your nonacademic responsibilities (work, family, etc.) (4)

Providing the support you need to thrive socially (5)

Attending campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural performances, athletic events, etc.) (6)

Using computers in academic work (7)

***To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?**

Acquiring a broad general education (1)

Acquiring job- or work-related knowledge and skills (2)

- Writing clearly and effectively (3)
- Speaking clearly and effectively (4)
- Thinking critically and analytically (5)
- Analyzing quantitative problems (6)
- Using computing and information technology (7)
- Working effectively with others (8)
- Voting in local, state, or national elections (9)
- Learning effectively on your own (10)
- Understanding yourself (11)
- Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds (12)
- Solving complex real-world problems (13)
- Developing a personal code of values and ethics (14)
- Contributing to the welfare of your community (15)
- Developing a deepened sense of spirituality (16)

***How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?**

- Excellent (1)
- Good (2)
- Fair (3)
- Poor (4)

***Overall, how would you evaluate the quality of academic advising you have received at your institution?**

- Excellent (1)
- Good (2)
- Fair (3)
- Poor (4)

***If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?**

- Definitely yes (1)
- Probably yes (2)
- Probably no (3)
- Definitely no (4)

The following questions were adapted from NSSE's "Experiences with Writing" Topical Module, which was developed by the Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA) and NSSE.

***During the current school year, for how many of your writing assignments have you done each of the following?**

Brainstormed (listed ideas, mapped concepts, prepared an outline, etc.) to develop your ideas before you started drafting your assignment (1)

- Talked with your instructor to develop your ideas before you started drafting your assignment (2)
- Talked with a classmate, friend, or family member to develop your ideas before you started drafting your assignment (3)
- Received feedback from your instructor about a draft before turning in your final assignment (4)
- Received feedback from a classmate, friend, or family member about a draft before turning in your final assignment (5)
- Visited a campus-based writing or tutoring center to get help with your writing assignment before turning it in (6)
- Used an online tutoring service to get help with your writing assignment before turning it in (7)
- Proofread your final draft for errors before turning it in (8)

***During the current school year, in how many of your writing assignments did you:**

- Narrate or describe one of your own experiences (1)
- Summarize something you read, such as articles, books, or online publications (2)
- Analyze or evaluate something you read, researched, or observed (3)
- Describe your methods or findings related to data you collected in lab or field work, a survey project, etc. (4)
- Argue a position using evidence and reasoning (5)
- Explain in writing the meaning of numerical or statistical data (6)
- Write in the style and format of a specific field (engineering, history, psychology, etc.) (7)
- Include drawings, tables, photos, screen shots, or other visual content in your written assignment (8)
- Create the project with multimedia (web page, poster, slide presentation such as PowerPoint, etc.) (9)

***During the current school year, for how many of your writing assignments has your instructor done each of the following?**

- Provided clear instructions describing what he or she wanted you to do (1)
- Explained in advance what he or she wanted you to learn (2)
- Explained in advance the criteria he or she would use to grade your assignment (3)
- Provided a sample of a completed assignment written by the instructor or a student (4)
- Asked you to do short pieces of writing that he or she did not grade (5)
- Asked you to give feedback to a classmate about a draft or outline the classmate had written (6)
- Asked you to write with classmates to complete a group project (7)
- Asked you to address a real or imagined audience such as your classmates, a politician, nonexperts, etc. (8)

***Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate from your institution?**

- Prepare a portfolio that collects written work from more than one class (1)
- Submit work you wrote or cowrote to a student or professional publication (magazine, journal, newspaper, collection of student work, etc.) (2)

The following questions come from the Daly-Miller Writing Questionnaire. Students chose responses to the following set of questions on a Likert scale from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating “strongly agree” and 5 indicating “strongly disagree.”

***Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:**

- I avoid writing. (1)
- I have no fear of my writing’s being evaluated. (2)
- I look forward to writing down my ideas. (3)
- I am afraid of writing essays when I know they will be evaluated. (4)
- Taking a composition course is a very frightening experience. (5)
- Handing in a composition makes me feel good. (6)
- My mind seems to go blank when I start to work on my composition. (7)

***Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:**

- Expressing ideas through writing seems to be a waste of time. (1)
- I would enjoy submitting my writing to magazines for evaluation and publication. (2)
- I like to write down my ideas. (3)
- I feel confident in my ability to express my ideas clearly in writing. (4)
- I like to have my friends read what I have written. (5)
- I’m nervous about writing. (6)

***Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:**

- People seem to enjoy what I write. (1)
- I enjoy writing. (2)
- I never seem to be able to write down my ideas clearly. (3)
- Writing is a lot of fun. (4)
- I expect to do poorly in composition classes even before I enter them. (5)
- I like seeing my thoughts on paper. (6)

***Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:**

- Discussing my writing with others is enjoyable. (1)
 - I have a terrible time organizing my ideas in a composition course. (2)
 - When I hand in a composition, I know I’m going to do poorly. (3)
 - It’s easy for me to write good compositions. (4)
 - I don’t think I write as well as most other people. (5)
 - I don’t like my compositions to be evaluated. (6)
 - I’m not good at writing. (7)
- The following questions were designed in-house.

Thank you for participating in this survey. Before you submit your responses, we have just a few more brief questions. How would you describe yourself as a writer? (Free response)

Do you speak or write in languages other than English?

Yes (1)

No (2)

If so, please indicate which languages you speak and/or write with proficiency.**What language(s) do you speak at home with your family?**

Only English (1)

Only a language (or languages) other than English (2)

Both English and another language (or languages) (3)

Other (please specify) (4) _____

When you were growing up, did at least one parent or guardian speak English as a first language?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Other (please specify) (3) _____

Where did you attend school for the following years? (Students indicate whether they were in the US, outside the US, or a mixture of both.)

Kindergarten or preschool/Ages 3–5 (1)

Elementary school (Grades 1-4)/Ages 6–10 (2)

Intermediate school (Grades 5-6)/Ages 11–12 (3)

Middle school or junior high school (Grades 7–8)/Ages 13–14 (4)

Secondary school or high school (Grades 9–12)/Ages 15–18 (5)

EXIT SURVEY QUESTIONS

Students chose responses to the following set of questions, designed in-house, on a scale from 1 to 4, with 1 indicating “very much” or “a lot” and 4 indicating “never” or “not at all.”

How frequently did you do the following over the course of your college career?

Create and use video digital media (1)

Create and use audio digital media (2)

Create web pages (3)

Create and work with podcasts or enhanced podcasts (4)

Create and work with blogs or microblogs (5)

Create electronic presentations using PowerPoint, Prezi, or other presentation software (6)

Evaluate websites for credibility, scholarly sources, etc. (7)

Create online games (8)

Create remixes or mash-ups (9)

Online publishing or writing (10)

Create and use electronic portfolios (11)

Create animation (12)

Create apps (13)

Use digital editing tools such as Photoshop and other editing software (14)

**In the last four years, what kind of writing has been most important to you, and why?
(Free response)**

Thank you for participating in this survey. Before you submit your responses, we have just one more brief question. How would you describe yourself as a writer? (Free response)