

Franklin College of Arts and Sciences Writing Intensive Program
Student Responses Fall 2009

"The assignments were geared to a range of effort, gradually leading up to full-on papers at a rate that made me get to the final paper, write it, and say:

'Wow. At the beginning of the semester I NEVER could have done this.' "I didn't always understand what I had done in class, but writing about it later on forced me to look at the material all over again and in a new light." "The more I wrote about what we were doing, I understood it better, which allowed me to feel comfortable participating in discussions and giving presentations."

SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

1) My experience in this course strengthened

my writing. *"I came into the class not thinking I needed much help in my writing. However, with the help of Miriam, I have found a depth and clarity in my writing that I didn't know could exist." "Before doing the writing assignments for Bio lab, I did not know that graphs and charts needed to be labeled as figures and tables. I also learned to be more clear and concise, while maintaining the interest of the reader in my writing." "This course forced me to apply my writing skills (that I previously thought only concerned English classes) to biology." "This is the first class in my two years that has allowed me to write essays on a regular basis." "I was challenged to make my writing understandable and clear for readers. I like the way the writing portion of the class was handled. Being able to continuously revise my work until it was deemed satisfactory was a good way to make me aware of my mistakes and how to correct them."*

SA	A	D	SD
53	255	74	7
14%	66%	19%	1%

SA + A = 80%

BIOL 1103L/110L7/1108L

184	540	281	76
17%	50%	26%	7%

SA + A = 67%

2) The writing assignments enhanced my learning

of the subject matter of this course. *"Sometimes there was no way to understand it, except to "hash out" the material through writing." "Sometimes I would not understand the concepts that we completed in class. But the writing assignments reinforced the material and enabled me to gain a better grasp on the topic." "When I had to write, I had to put it into words that others would understand; therefore I had to learn about what I was discussing, so I could write in an effective manner." "I had to think about the subject matter more and make connections I never would have made with just one reading."*

SA	A	D	SD
126	204	53	7
32%	52%	14%	1%

SA + A = 84%

BIOL 1103L/1107L/1108L

216	583	227	54
20%	54%	21%	5%

SA + A = 74%

3) The writing assignments encouraged me to be

actively involved in the course. *"If you haven't read it, you definitely can't write a paper on it." "I felt more prepared with these assignments, and I was always ready to ask questions, discuss further with other students, and provide unique ideas to the situations." "Since I understood the writing assignments, I was more confident in the work that I did in the lab. When I'm confident, I talk more." "I knew I'd have to [write] a lot about what was going on, so I didn't zone-out during labs." "I wouldn't say 'encourage' is quite the right word. It seemed to force me and my fellow lab partners to remain working on the lab for about 2 to 3 days out of the week. But*

SA	A	D	SD
95	206	81	3
24%	53%	21%	

SA + A = 77%

BIOL 1103L/1107L/1108L

205	551	259	65
19%	51%	24%	6%

SA + A = 70%

overall, we were actively participating in the lab outside of the actual lab.”
 “They encouraged me to research outside of the classroom and ask more questions when in class.”

4) The writing assignments helped me to understand the ways of writing that are particular to this subject (for example: the ways of writing in the sciences, the social sciences, or the humanities). *“Helped me understand that you write differently for different audiences.” “Especially the research papers we had to write. Looking through many scholarly essays for writing my own lab reports helped me better understand how to write these papers—where information should go, how I should paraphrase ideas, how to incorporate information with experiment information.” “I definitely learned the major parts of a scientific paper, including how much (and sometimes how little) information to include in a procedural write up.” “The final research paper has helped me gain a stronger understanding of how art historians research and write.” “I learned how musicologists write. This was my first exposure to Chicago style.”*

SA	A	D	SD
104	206	72	6
27%	53%	19%	1%

SA + A = 80%

BIOL 1103L/1107L/1108L			
270	572	184	54
25%	53%	17%	5%

SA + A = 78%

5) The coaching I received from the teaching assistant was effective: *“He was amazingly patient and helpful in all the writing assignments, showing us what needed improvement and what we did well on.” “He went over each section of the research paper with us to make sure each of us understood what was expected. He also required us to turn in two drafts, which was very effective because he provided lots of feedback and showed us our strengths, weaknesses, and where we could improve.” “Writing suggestions from my TA did not simply tell me what needed to be fixed, but why fixing it would make it better.” “He was easily approachable and tried to explain things in ways that caused you to think for yourself.” “My TA explained the differences between citing sources in scientific papers as opposed to other types of papers, as well as how to effectively and concisely explain scientific procedures.”*

SA	A	D	SD
115	208	52	14
30%	53%	13%	4%

SA + A = 83%

BIOL 1103L/1107L/1108L			
335	508	173	65
31%	47%	16%	6%

SA + A = 78%

6) The writing element of this class increased my satisfaction with the overall course: *“I liked having a finished product (final paper) to see what I had learned. It made me read and think about the material that with lecture alone I may have disregarded.” “Although a pain, the writing assignments really do make you appreciate the course. It feels good to complete a great paper on something you actually did research on yourself!” “It cleared up my questions because I basically redid the lab on my own at home.” “At first, I didn’t really care for the writing assignments I had to do. But by the end, when we were writing the research article, I realized that I had learned a lot about scientific writing, and I quickly became comfortable writing the article, even though at the beginning of the semester it had worried me a lot.”*

SA	A	D	SD
60	195	106	26
15%	50%	27%	8%

SA + A = 65%

BIOL 1103L/1107L/1108L			
119	378	378	195
11%	35%	35%	18%

SA + A = 46%