Using Assessment to improve instruction

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Perspectives on Assessment

- Multiple forms
- Multiple participants
- Multiple contexts

Historical Overview of writing assessment

- Indirect measure
- Direct impromptu
- Portfolio
- Directed self placement

Assessment for placement

- Directed Self Placement
  - Shift to reading article and writing essay written at home during extended time
  - Answering questions that reflect on experiences with writing
  - Making decisions based on multiple pieces of data

2009 Essay

- **Reading:** Malcom Gladwell's "Most Likely to Succeed"
- **Writing**: Write a 750-900 word academic essay in response to the prompt below. By academic essay we mean one in which you take a position and support it with evidence from the article
- **Prompt: Analyze Gladwell's proposal on how to select and retain teachers and argue for or against his proposal**

Essay will be evaluated on….

- 1. Focus: your essay should be developed around a **clear central thesis** or **argument**, integrating your own views with material from the article.
- 2. Structure: your essay should be **clearly organized** in a way that elaborates on and **supports** your central thesis. Individual paragraphs should be cohesive, and your reader should be able to follow the logical progression of your ideas from one paragraph to the next.
- 3. Evidence/Analysis: make sure that you **support your claims** with well-chosen examples from the article, and that you explain how these examples support your points.

Native English Speaker – DSP Reflection Questions

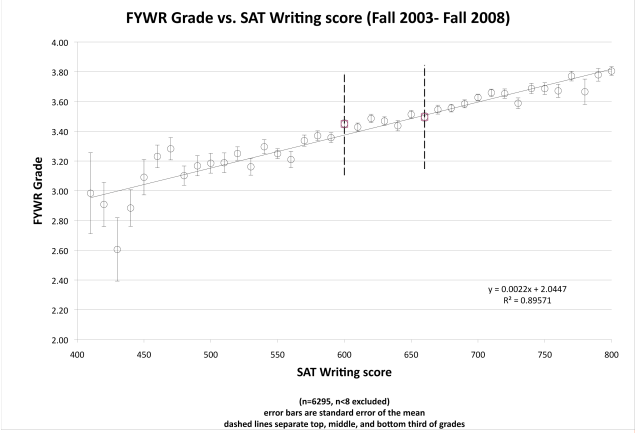
1. In high school, I regularly wrote critical responses to assigned readings, as I did in this task.
2. In high school, I rarely had to write sustained and detailed arguments.
3. I am comfortable writing academic essays longer than four pages.
4. I have experience writing essays on a variety of topics in which I take a position and support that position using evidence.
5. In high school, I wrote essays that required library research and the citation of sources.
6. I read portions of the Gladwell article more than one time.
7. I am confident that I know how to write an effective essay in which I express and support a position.
8. I had trouble finding examples from the Gladwell article to support my argument.
9. In writing my response to the Gladwell article, I went back and looked over my own writing at least once.
10. I feel prepared to write similar essays in my first year of college without a lot of help from my instructor.

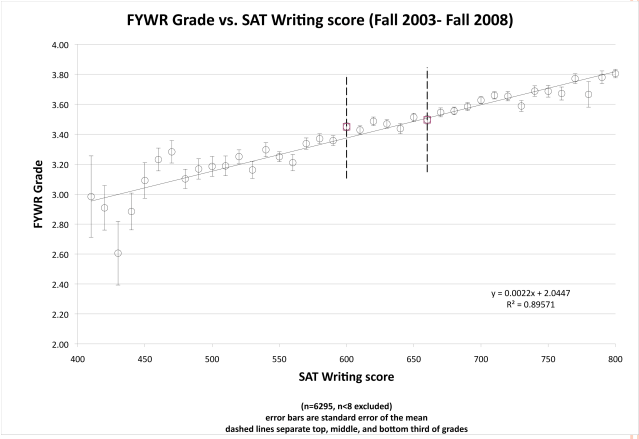
Student self assessment based on….

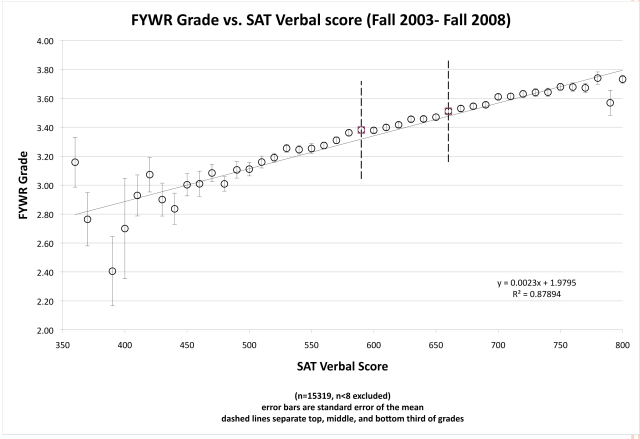
- Experiences with writing
- Answers to questions
- Comparison with other students

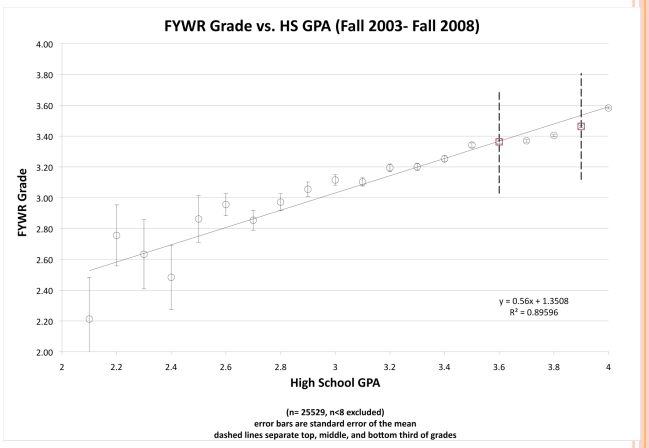
Data Collecting, Analysis

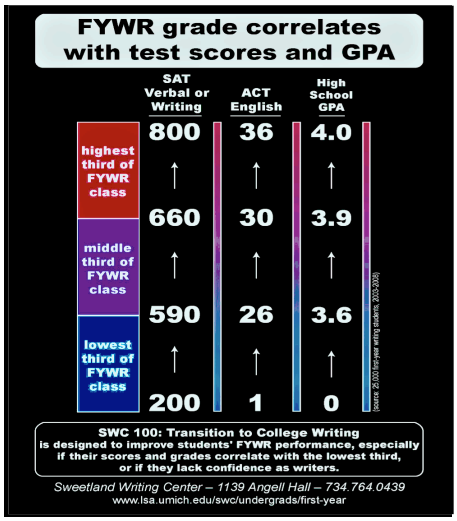
- Using UM's Data Warehouse, SWC identified markers of students who performed in the lowest third of their first-year writing requirement course:
  - High School GPA ⇩ 3.3
  - SAT Writing Score ⇩ 520
  - SAT Verbal Score ⇩ 520
  - ACT English Score ⇩ 23











Advisors' role in assessment for placement

- Provide and interpret information
- Help student make decision

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Placement Report for Williams,Stephanie Anne Grace 30-APR-2009

		SAT			ACT			
Emplid:	75950289	Verbal	Math	English	Math	Reading	Science	Combined
HS GPA:	4.00	630	650	32	28	28	24	28
HS %ILE:	99							

Essay — Recommended: First-Year Writing Requirement Course (Based on essay)
Test Results: Reading: Listening: Test Date: 20-APR-2009
Years Studied: 0 Last Studied:

Because your Directed Self-Placement essay demonstrated what we expect in an evidence-based academic argument, we recommend that you consider enrolling in a course that meets the First-Year Writing Requirement.

Math — Recommended: Calculus, definite recommendation
Test Results: Math Percentage: 84 HS Calc: Yes Test Date: 02-JUN-2008

Your math placement test score and admissions data (e.g., SAT Math, ACT Math, and high school grade point average) indicate that you are prepared to enter the UM calculus sequence at the beginning level or above. Math 115 is the most common first course in calculus, but there are several other alternatives (Math 175 and 185) that you should consider. Moreover, if you have had a strong high school calculus course and/or have a score of 4 or higher on either the AB or BC Mathematics Advanced Placement Exam, one of the more advanced calculus courses (Math 116, 156, 215, 285, or 295) may be more suitable, and you are encouraged to consult a special Math Placement Advisor.

Writing — Recommended: FYWR Course Test Date: 30-APR-2009

Because your responses conformed with what we expect of skilled and confident writers, a course that meets the First-Year Writing Requirement makes sense for you. Approved First-Year Writing Courses offered at the university include Classical Civilization 101, Classical Civilization 121, Comparative Literature 122, English 124, English 125, Great Books 191, History 195, Lloyd Hall Scholars Program 125, Residential College Core 100, and Slavic 151.

Latin — Recommended: Latin 103
Test Results: Reading: Listening: Test Date: 23-JUN-2008
Years Studied: 0 Last Studied:

Latin 103 (Review Latin) is a refresher course for students with some high school Latin. It condenses the~work of first-year college Latin (101 and 102) into one semester, and it prepares students for second-year~college Latin (Latin 231). Your placement into 103 is based primarily on your performance on the Latin~placement exam, but it is also based in part on the amount and recency of your Latin study. Latin 103 is~offered in the Fall term only.^

		Placement Recommendation based on DSP Essay		
		SWC 100	FYWR Course	
Placement Recommendation based on DSP Questions	ELI 120	ELI 120	SWC 100	SWC Final Placement Recommendation Based on both Results
	SWC 100	SWC 100	FYWR Course	
	FYWR Course	SWC 100	FYWR Course	

Assessment for diagnosis

	[SWC 100 RANGE]		[FYWR* RANGE]	
	POOR	INADEQUATE	ADEQUATE	EXCELLENT
Central Claim & Fulfillment	Central claim is missing, or present but abandoned or unconnected to rest of the essay.	Central claim lacks sufficient clarity; argument too broad or general and remains mostly unfulfilled.	Central claim is adequately clear, indicates a position, and is mostly fulfilled in the essay.	Central claim is clear, specific, and fulfilled, effectively unifying the essay around an argument.
Evidence & Support	Essay lacks evidence, justification, effective use of quotes from article, or logical reasoning to support claims.	Evidence provided is insufficient in amount, variety of style, or logic; support is inadequate or irrelevant.	Evidence and use of quotes are largely accurate, varied, logical, and relevant; claims are mostly supported.	Essay employs sophisticated evidence and use of quotes, demonstrates complexity in warrants, and fully supports claims.
Organization & Development	Paragraphs and essay structure are disorganized, highly repetitive, lack development and/or effective transitions.	Paragraphs and structure are inadequately developed or repetitive or inconsistent in using topic sentences and transitions.	Paragraphs and essay structure are largely unified, developed, and adequately employ topic sentences and transitions.	Paragraphs and structure advance the thesis, with effective transitions and development through specific detail.
Nuance & Complexity	Consistently and overly generalized or facile conclusions; lacks nuance.	Contains many generalized or facile conclusions; assertions may lack sufficient nuance.	May contain some generalizations or facile conclusions. Assertions attempt some nuance.	Lacks sweeping generalizations; assertions are nuanced and complex.
Tone & Diction	Tone and diction are informal, inconsistent, insufficiently academic, or otherwise ineffective.	Significant use of informal diction; tone is not convincing or overly personal.	Effective academic tone is mostly maintained. Some informal/personal expressions may appear.	Academic tone is established through focus on argument. Diction is appropriate and formal.
Sentence Structure & Mechanics	Sentence structure or other mechanical errors significantly interfere with meaning.	Essay has many sentence structure or mechanical errors; some overly simple or convoluted sentences.	Essay may contain mechanical errors or a few sentence structure errors; sentences are complex and varied.	Sentences are sophisticated in style and structure. No mechanical errors detract significantly from meaning.

Assessment for Learning

- Use essay for
  - Benchmark
  - Revision
  - Portfolio reflection

What are Writing Portfolios?

- Writing portfolios are ***a purposeful collection of student work that shows student's efforts, progress, and achievement in (a) given area(s), including their meta-cognitive narrative of that progress.***
- Include various texts and a reflective text

Writing Portfolios: More Details

- Record of prior writings out of which the writing emerges
- Reading, writing texts own developmental context
- Show product and process
- Reflection makes meaning more complex, less anonymous

Writing Portfolios: Benefits

- **Documents and encourages students' progress and reflection**
- More complete picture of student work
- Generated during the process of instruction
- Foster critical approach to development and presentation of development

What are Electronic Portfolios?

- More than digital versions of paper portfolios
- E-portfolios are ***a thoughtfully arranged collection of multimedia-rich, interlinked documents that students compose and maintain on the Internet or in other formats***
- Afford different rhetorical opportunities
- Allows students to engage in digital mediums reflectively

Electronic Portfolios: Benefits

- Resist linear model
- Show connections
- Showcase job-related accomplishments
- Shared across classes, groups

For instructors: Assessing portfolios meaningfully

- Assuming a greater role in institutional assessment
- Identifying principles and practices of e-portfolios that foster student reflection
- Providing opportunities for students to give each other feedback

Assessment improves instruction by…

- Taking multiple forms
- Involving multiple participants
- Occurring in multiple contexts