

Millikin University
Report on Student Learning in IN150 and IN151
(Critical Writing, Reading and Research I and II)
Academic Year 2017–2018
Dr. Julie Bates, IN150/151 Coordinator
June 29, 2018

Executive Summary

Critical Writing, Reading, and Research (CWRR) I and II—also designated as IN150 and IN151, respectively—are part of the sequential requirements in the Millikin Program of Student Learning (MPSL). Housed in the University Studies interdepartmental sequential curriculum required of all students—including traditional, Enhanced, Honors, and accelerated—IN150 and IN151 are vital to Millikin’s ongoing Writing-Across-the-Curriculum initiative and also work to support university-wide learning goals. Specifically, our four learning goals focused on critical reading, writing, research, and reflection mirror Millikin University’s ongoing goal of fostering students’ ability to critically think and read in an effort to conduct ongoing inquiry.

To best assess how the CWRR program helps students meet the four learning goals outlined below, we use authentic artifact assessment of student-produced writing. Specifically, all CWRR students are required to submit three different pieces of writing for programmatic assessment: a reflection (collected in IN150), a reading response (collected in IN151), and a research essay (also collected in IN151). Because we believe in instructor autonomy, we do not have a standardized assignment sheet for each artifact. Rather, we ask that instructors adhere to our learning goals and incorporate these goals into their classes and writing projects. An assessment team, put together by the IN150/IN151 coordinator, goes through a rigorous norming session and then, using a rubric designed specifically for each artifact, assesses a percentage of the artifacts submitted (usually 10% each of submitted reflections, reading responses, and research essays).

The 2017–2018 assessment of the CWRR program reveals that our students can use more help with all artifacts. Assessment of the three student artifacts clearly indicates that students are performing at adequate levels, and one artifact scored excellent. All artifacts rate at an average of 72% or better, which brings the program closer to an ongoing goal of moving all scores at or above the 75% threshold. More data and a detailed analysis on these artifacts is included below in Section 3.

This document contains the following sections:

1. An overview of the CWRR program and how the collected artifacts are used to assess our learning goals
2. An overview of the 2017–2018 CWRR program, with particular attention to staffing, class sizes, classrooms, and initiatives undertaken during the academic year
3. Assessment data of the three artifacts collected and analysis of that data
4. Suggestions for 2018–2019
5. Appendices—Assessment Rubric

Section 1: Overview of CWRR

This section provides a brief discussion of the learning goals and priorities of Millikin's two-course first-year writing sequence.

The learning outcome goals for IN150 and IN151 are as follows:

1. Read critically to comprehend, analyze, and evaluate texts
2. Write polished, informed essays for personal, public, and/or specialized audiences
3. Conduct research to participate in academic inquiry
4. Reflect on engagements with critical reading, writing, and research to acquire, examine and present self-awareness about those engagements.

The following table describes how our learning goals are assessed through our data collection process (described above in the Executive Summary).

Table 1: Learning Goals/Artifacts

Data	Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4
Reading Response	X	X		
Research Essay	X	X	X	
Reflection		X		X

What is unique to Millikin University's first-year writing sequence is that almost every student is required to take BOTH courses; there is no testing out of IN150 or IN151. In IN150, students broadly explore academic inquiry through formal and informal essay writing. Naturally, there is an emphasis on the relationship between critical reading and writing, but how that relationship is taught varies widely from instructor to instructor. In IN151, students continue their intellectual inquiry and growth by investigating and researching a topic of their choice. Both classes emphasize skills faculty deem to be imperative for academic and professional success (as shown in Table 2). We believe our focus on reading, writing, research, and reflection is applicable across disciplines.

Table 2: Curriculum Map

	Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4
CWRR I	X	X	X	X
CWRR II	X	X	X	X

The CWRR learning outcomes also help deliver the university-wide goals, articulated below:

1. Professional success
2. Democratic citizenship in a global environment
3. A personal life of meaning and value.

The program contributes primarily to *professional success preparation* and the *development of*

a personal life of meaning and value. Specifically, CWRR's first, second, and third learning goals help prepare students for *professional success* by introducing students to:

- Academic inquiry (supplanted by information literacy instruction)
- The ability to identify with and write for a specialized, public audience
- The ability to carefully and thoughtfully read and analyze a variety of text types.

Asking students to reflect on the uses of reading and writing (the fourth goal) prepares students for a life of *personal meaning and value*. Although there are opportunities for IN150 and IN151 to contribute to the development of democratic citizenship in a global environment, and some faculty emphasize this in their approaches to teaching IN150 and IN151, it is not a main focus of the program.

The four learning outcomes of the CWRR program also help deliver the following Millikin Program of Student Learning (MPSL) student learning outcome goals:

1. Learn to access, read deliberately, critically evaluate, reflect on, integrate, and use appropriate resources for research and practical application
2. Utilize qualitative inquiry as tools in decision making and creative problem solving
3. Demonstrate general technological literacy
4. Develop an understanding of themselves and the ability to reflect on and express their thoughts and feelings responsibly.

Additionally, the CWRR program works to introduce students to Millikin's adherence to the theory into practice model (often referred to as "Performance Based Learning") by asking students to put the writing/reading theories discussed in class into practice (in the form of essay writing). Moreover, we are actively looking to offer students the opportunity to write for "real" audiences. For example, we continually offer "Performance Based Learning" opportunities through the annual Celebration of Scholarship.

Section 2: Overview of 2017–2018 CWRR

This “snapshot” aims to show the number of courses offered per semester, the types of courses offered per semester, an understanding of who is teaching our courses, class sizes, facilities used, and initiatives undertaken by the program during 2017–2018.

Class Size Update

Table 3: Fall 2017 Overview

Type of Course	Students Enrolled	Number of Sections	Average Class Size
Traditional/Accelerated 150	311	16	19.4
“Enhanced” 150	84	6	14
Honors 150	93	5	18.6
Traditional/Accelerated (Off-Semester) 151	34	3	11.3
Total	522	30	17.4

Table 4: Spring 2018 Overview

Type of Course	Students Enrolled	Number of Sections	Average Class Size
Traditional/Accelerated (Off-Semester) 150	29	2	14.5
Traditional/Accelerated 151	307	16	19.2
Honors 151	86	6	14.3
Total	422	24	17.6

Table 5: Trends in Class Sizes

	2017–2018	2016–2017	2015–2016	2014–2015	2013–2014	2012–2013	2011–2012	2010–2011	2009–2010	2008–2009	2007–2008	2006–2007
Avg. Class Size	17.5	17.2	14.4	17.3	18.3	17.7	19.5	No Data	19	18.58	18.07	18.6

Class Size Data Analysis

The data collected on course sizes for 2017–2018 reveals that the writing program did an exemplary job of holding class sizes down in both IN150 and IN151, while also ensuring that the courses were not under-enrolled. Table Five reveals the consistent work we do in holding class sizes down in IN150 and IN151. It is important to note that the overall number of students enrolled in Enhanced sections of IN150 in Fall 2017 more than doubled from Fall 2016. As a result, two additional Enhanced sections were added to the Fall 2017 schedule so class sizes remain capped at 15. The number of Enhanced sections is expected to increase again to seven or even eight section for Fall 2018.

According to a special committee formed by the Conference on College Composition and Communication (4Cs)—a subsidiary of the National Council of Teachers of English and one of the major governing bodies for first-year writing policies—traditional first-year writing classes

should not exceed 20 students. Basic, or remedial, writing courses, should not exceed 15 students. This position statement, entitled “Principles for the Postsecondary Teaching of Writing,” was originally crafted in 1989, but was revised at the 2015 Conference on College Composition and Communication. It is of note that the Association of English Departments (ADE) has adopted 4Cs guidelines and thus asserts that maintaining these class sizes should be part of a writing program’s mission. Given Millikin’s mandate to provide first-rate education for its students, it is imperative that the first-year writing program—including both IN150 and IN151—closely follows the guidelines put forth by 4Cs and does not have writing courses exceed 20 students. Additionally, “Enhanced” or off-semester sections (akin to remedial writing courses) should not exceed 15 students.

Class Size Suggestions for 2018–2019

- Check class sizes regularly following Registration days and work closely with the English Department chair, the Dean overseeing University Studies, and the Registrar to ensure that course caps are enforced: 20 students for Traditional sections of IN150 and IN151, 18 students for Honors sections of 150 and 151 (although preferred best practices for the new approach to Honors first-year writing, which will be discussed further below, would be to cap class sizes at no more than 16), and 15 for Enhanced and off-semester sections of IN150 & IN151.
- Open new sections of IN150, IN150 (E), or HN150 if enrollment exceeds projections.
- Consolidate courses if sections of IN150, IN150 (E), or HN150 are under-enrolled, in an effort to not waste university resources, while still maintaining the mandated course caps.

Faculty and Facilities Update

Table 6: Breakdown of Faculty and Facilities Fall 2017

Faculty Name	Faculty Type (Full or Part Time)	Type of Course Taught	Rooms Taught In
Bates, Julie	FT	Enhanced 150 (2)	SH 311, 412
Braniger, Carmella	FT	Enhanced 150 (2)	SCO 006
Crowe, Judi	FT	Traditional 150 (1) Honors 150 (2)	SCO 005, 208, 213, 315
Douglas, Philip	PT	Traditional 150 (2)	LTSC 302, SH 420
Frech, Stephen	FT	Enhanced 150 (1)	SCO 010
Grice, Karly	FT	Traditional 150 (2)	SH 302, 311
Hollis-George, Michael	FT	Traditional 150 (1)	SH 315

Lambert, Scott	FT	Traditional 150 (3) Traditional 151 (1)	LTSC 1, SH 316, SCO 313
Magagna, Tony	FT	Traditional 150 (1) Honors 150 (1)	SCO 211, 309
Matthews, Anne	FT	Traditional 150 (2) Enhanced 150 (1)	LTSC 422, SH 311, G 226
O'Conner, Michael	FT	Honors 150 (2)	SH 315, SCO 313
Patricio, Danielle	PT	Traditional 150 (1) Traditional 151 (2)	SH 409
Rahman, Mijan	PT	Traditional 150 (1)	SH 311
Zorn, Bill	PT	Traditional 150 (2)	SH 318, 323

Table 7: Breakdown of Faculty and Facilities Spring 2018

Faculty Name	Faculty Type (Full or Part Time)	Type of Course Taught	Rooms Taught In
Bates, Julie	FT	Traditional 151 (1)	SH 319
Braniger, Carmella	FT	Traditional 150 (2)	SCO 005, 010
Crowe, Judi	FT	Traditional 151 (1) Honors 151 (2)	SCO 213, 313
Douglas, Philip	PT	Traditional 151 (2)	SH 302, 315
Frech, Stephen	FT	None	None
Grice, Karly	FT	Traditional 151 (2)	SH 320, 327
Hollis-George, Michael	FT	Traditional 151 (1)	SH 409
Lambert, Scott	FT	Traditional 151 (1)	SH 311
Magagna, Tony	FT	Traditional 151 (2)	SH 412
Matthews, Anne	FT	Honors 151 (2)	SH 418
O'Conner, Michael	FT	Honors 151 (2)	UC 142
Patricio, Danielle	PT	Traditional 151 (2)	SH 311, 412

Rahman, Mijan	PT	Traditional 151 (1)	SH 323
Zorn, Bill	PT	Traditional 151 (3)	SCO 208, SH 327

Table 8: Trends in Staff

Faculty Type	SP 18	FA 17	SP 17	FA 16	SP 16	FA 15	SP 15	FA 14	SP 14	FA 13	SP 13	FA 12	SP 12	FA 11	2011 2012	SP 10	FA 09	SP 09	FA 08	SP 08	FA 07	SP 07	FA 06
Full-Time Faculty	9	10	8	7	10	11	11	10	10	11	11	11	10	11	No Data	12	12	11	11	11	11	11	12
Part-Time/ Adjunct Faculty	4	4	5	6	2	5	5	6	5	4	5	6	5	6	No Data	5	4	2	3	2	2	2	2
Total	13	14	13	13	12	16	16	16	15	15	16	17	15	17	No Data	17	16	13	14	13	13	13	14

Faculty and Facilities Analysis

Staffing

As past program reports have asserted, an ongoing goal is to ensure as many sections of first-year writing are staffed by full-time faculty as possible. We have continued to do this in 2017–2018. However, low numbers of full-time faculty and a number of constraints on faculty time (such as course releases, discussed further below) limit our ability to staff first-year writing solely with full-time faculty. Thus, the contributions of part-time instructors remain vital to our program.

Table Eight reveals that staff trends remained relatively consistent in 2017–2018 with recent prior years. Some context for these numbers:

- Dr. Karly Grice joined the full-time faculty for 2017–2018, which returned our full-time faculty count to 10
- All full-time faculty taught at least one section of first-year writing in Fall 2017; most taught two and some taught three.
- In Spring 2018, Dr. Stephen Frech did not teach any first-year writing courses due to the Warren F. Hardy Distinguished Professorship in English. Dr. Julie Bates only taught one section of first-year writing due to her IN150/IN151 coordinator course release. Dr. Michael Hollis-George only taught one section of first-year writing due to his English Department Chair course release.

Moving forward, it remains important to a) keep supporting full-time faculty instructors in our first-year writing program and b) respect and value the contributions made by part-time instructors. To that end, it is imperative that we keep the first-year writing course load manageable: no more than two FYC courses per semester for tenured/tenure-track faculty and

no more than three FYC courses per semester for non-tenured/non-tenure-track faculty. This will allow our faculty to invest the proper amount of time for meeting with students, assessing student work, and prepping lessons for the course itself.

It is important to note that full-time faculty availability to teach first-year writing will be reduced considerably in 2018–2019 due to: course releases for Dr. Stephen Frech, Dr. Michael Hollis-George, and Dr. Julie Bates; Dr. Anne Matthews' absence in Fall 2018 while she is teaching in London for the semester; and Dr. Tony Magagna's absence for all of 2018–2019 while he is completing his Fulbright teaching abroad. As a result, Professor Danielle Patricio has been hired as a full-time instructor to cover additional sections of first-year writing. However, even with that addition, the first-year writing program will have to rely more heavily on adjunct instructors during the coming school year. Fortunately, this year's adjunct search yielded a large number of qualified candidates, 2 to 3 of which will be hired to teach open sections of first-year writing in 2018–2019 depending on course enrollments.

Faculty Development

The 2017–2018 school year was one of transition for the first-year writing program leadership. During Fall 2017, Dr. Julie Bates worked as coordinator-in-training with Dr. Carmella Braniger, the interim coordinator of first-year writing. Then, in Spring 2018, Dr. Bates took over the role of coordinator of first-year writing. Thus, the majority of faculty development listed below occurred in Spring 2018, once the coordinator transition was complete.

The following faculty development opportunities were offered in 2017–2018:

- Observations. The first-year writing coordinator observed new faculty and provided feedback.
- Mentorship. The English Department Chair assigned each new full-time faculty member a mentor/partner to share ideas with.
- Syllabi review. All new faculty were required to submit their syllabi to the first-year writing coordinator for feedback and review.
- Faculty meetings. During Spring 2018, new first-year writing coordinator Dr. Julie Bates implemented CWRR & Coffee, a monthly two-hour meeting that provided space for faculty to come and go in person or online via a private Facebook group to share resources and ideas, express concerns, ask questions, and provide feedback on changes being considered for the first-year writing program.

Facilities & Technology

In 2017–2018, CWRR courses were taught in the following locations: Shilling Hall, ADM-Scovill, Leighty-Tabor Science Center, and Griswold Center. One section of first-year writing also was taught in classroom space in the new University Commons building in Spring 2018; that space was not available for classes in Fall 2017. Following the trend in past years, most sections were taught in Shilling Hall and ADM-Scovill. Most CWRR faculty request facilities equipped with educational technology stations, and many ask for a computer lab.

We believe that teaching writing using technology is imperative to student success in the 21st

century. According to the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) “Position Statement on Teaching, Learning, and Assessing Writing in Digital Environments, “[I]ncreasingly, classes and programs in writing require that students compose digitally.”

The CWRR Program continues to move in the direction of these priorities and seeks an increasing number of facilities for teaching CWRR courses in electronic lab classrooms. However, electronic lab space on campus is at a premium and only a small number of our classes can be held in computer labs each semester. Thus, in 2017–2018, we continued to offer some Electronic Learning Community sections of CWRR. These courses, which require all students enrolled to bring a fully charged laptop to every class, reduce some of the strain on CWRR faculty requesting a limited number of computer labs for class. In Fall 2017, two Wireless Environment (WE) sections were offered; in Spring 2018, an additional two WE sections were offered. These numbers are down dramatically from previous semesters because, beginning with Fall 2017, all incoming students were “required” to bring a personal laptop to campus with them which, faculty assumed, would better enable students in all sections of first-year writing to access laptop technology during class time. As the 2017–2018 school year progressed, however, first-year writing faculty learned that many students did not have the “required” technology, and other students came with laptops that were too outdated or limited in their capabilities and were not usable on a regular basis—if at all—during class time.

As faculty concerns with student laptop access increased throughout the 2017–2018 school year, Dr. Michael Hollis-George (English Department chair) and Dr. Julie Bates (first-year writing coordinator) worked to identify possible solutions for laptop access for students. After pursuing a number of possibilities, they used English Department funds to purchase a secure computer cabinet and worked with IT to obtain five used laptops (at no cost to the English department). The laptops will be stored in the computer cabinet and will be available for checkout by first-year writing faculty for 2018–2019 so students who do not have their own technology can use the laptops during class time.

Faculty and Facilities Suggestions for 2018–2019

- Support all faculty teaching first-year writing by continuing to offer multiple venues for faculty to seek support, ask questions, and collaborate. CWRR & Coffee meetings and online discussions via Facebook will take a slightly different approach for 2018–2019, focusing more on faculty development specific to areas of concern, including extra assistance for faculty teaching Honors and Enhanced sections of first-year writing and adjunct instructors who are new to teaching first-year writing at Millikin.
- Encourage faculty to submit documents to the “repository” started on Moodle so faculty can share resources and best practices.
- Collect syllabi from all first-year writing faculty to ensure learning goals are met.
- Seek additional access to technology for first-year writing students, including acquiring more laptops for the department’s new laptop cart and advocating for additional computer lab space for first-year writing classes.

Honors Updates

Although the majority of Millikin students who take IN150/IN151 are enrolled in traditional/accelerated sections, a number of students enroll in Honors sections of first-year writing. This section provides updates specific to Honors first-year writing.

Beginning in 2017–2018, Honors sections are now designated as HN150 and HN151 rather than IN150 and IN151. Despite the change in designation, for 2017–2018, Honors first-year writing faculty taught their courses much the same as they had when the courses were under the IN designation. However, over the course of the 2017–2018 school year, first-year writing coordinator Dr. Julie Bates and Honors Program director Dr. Mike Hartsock collaborated to develop a revised approach to teaching HN150 and HN151. This revision was done in consultation with English department faculty, particularly those faculty who have or will soon be teaching Honors first-year writing, and was approved by Council on Curriculum at the end of the Spring 2018 term. The changes to HN150 and HN151, which will be implemented beginning with the 2018–2019 school year, help differentiate HN150 and HN151 from traditional sections of IN150 and IN151 in name, description, goals, and overall approach; better align these courses with the goal of the Honors Program and best practices in the teaching of writing in general and Honors writing in particular; and will help better prepare students for the types of critical writing, reading, and research they will undertake during their time in the Honors Program.

Honors Suggestions for 2018–2019

Over the next year, Honors first-year writing faculty will be working to implement the new approach to teaching HN150 and HN151. Although the original first-year writing learning goals remain in place, additional learning goals have been added for HN150 and HN151, and the schedule and approach to teaching will require dramatic pedagogical revisions for many Honors faculty. As with any major curricular change, faculty likely will face challenges as they implement the new approach. The first-year writing coordinator is compiling resources (available via Moodle) and planning workshops/meetings for Honors first-year writing faculty before and during the Fall 2018 semester to enable resource sharing and troubleshooting.

It is important to note that the new iteration of HN150 and HN151 takes a writing studio approach, which differs from a traditional classroom setup in terms of course structure and content and overall expectations for assignments. To provide students with more intensive faculty contact required of the studio approach, the Honors Program director and first-year writing coordinator would like to cap HN150 and HN151 sections at 16 students per section. Due to enrollment numbers and available Honors first-year writing sections, this cap was not possible for Fall 2018. However, the Honors Program director and first-year writing coordinator will continue to advocate for reduced class sizes to ensure the success of the new approach to HN150 and HN151.

The changes to HN150 and HN151 may present challenges for future iterations of this assessment report, both in terms of gathering data about faculty and facilities and in assessing student work, which may begin to look much different from traditional and Enhanced student

work. At this time, we still plan to collect and assess all artifacts from Honors, Enhanced, and traditional sections of first-year writing together. However, depending on how HN150 and HN151 progress in their new form, it is possible in the future we will have to consider assessing Honors artifacts separately from the others.

Enhanced Updates

Students in IN150 Enhanced sections benefit from smaller class sizes and increased attention from their professors in order to assist them in developing their critical reading, writing, and research skills so they prepare for the academic writing they will be expected to do during their time at Millikin. Students in E sections of IN150 still work to meet all of the same learning goals and outcomes as students in traditional/accelerated sections of IN150. Students in the E sections who pass IN150 in the Fall then take a traditional IN151 in spring. Some E section students also receive additional assistance from student interns (usually English Education majors) who assist faculty teaching “E” sections during class time and by holding their own office hours.

In 2017–2018, students were placed in E sections based on assessment of a writing sample conducted by a team of CWRR faculty. The placement process for Fall 2017 proved challenging due to changing timetables for Orientation and Registration, which started in April (rather than June) and ended in July. Given faculty teaching loads and this new schedule, faculty determined it was not possible to look at every student’s writing. Instead, only students who earned a composite score of 20 on the English and Reading portions of the ACT were asked (not mandated) to produce a writing sample based on a prompt written by the writing team. These students were then placed into either an E section or a traditional IN150 section, based on inter-rater reliability. Four faculty members (Dr. Anne Matthews, Dr. Carmella Braniger, Dr. Julie Bates, and Professor Judi Crowe) read every submission and rated each one. The team met several times between April and June 2017 to review ratings and place students accordingly. More than 127 students were initially identified as needing to take the sample. Of those students invited, 107 students submitted essays, and 47 were placed in E sections. For students who did not submit writing samples, it was agreed that students with a sub-score of 16 or below on the English and Reading portions of the ACT would be automatically placed by the Registrar’s office in E sections. As a result, for 2017–2018, six E sections were offered.

The number of Enhanced IN150 sections has increased dramatically since they were first introduced: from one section in 2015–2016 to four in 2016–2017 to six sections in 2017–2018. Most recently, the number of students placed in Enhanced sections more than doubled from 37 in 2016–2017 to 84 in 2017–2018. This number is expected to increase yet again in 2018–2019.

Enhanced Suggestions for 2018–2019

The process for assessing student writing and placing students in E sections remained problematic for 2017–2018 due to changes to Registration processes (as discussed above). To remedy these issues, in 2017–2018 the first-year writing coordinator worked with a number of campus stakeholders to implement a slightly modified approach to placement for Fall 2018. That approach, which is discussed further below, must be refined again for Fall 2019 placement.

Because the number of Enhanced sections is expected to increase once again for 2018–2019, more faculty are needed to teach E sections than in previous semesters, including some faculty who have not taught E sections previously. More support is necessary for faculty teaching Enhanced sections through the sharing of best practices and resources. Additionally, despite increasing numbers of students who need Enhanced IN150, it is necessary to continue to limit Enhanced class sizes to no more than 15 to ensure students get the individualized attention they need.

Section 3: Assessment Data and Analysis

Overview of Artifact Assessment

As indicated earlier in this document, the first-year writing program uses authentic assessment, which means that a team of IN150/IN151 faculty examines actual student writing. Specifically, the faculty use rubrics (see appendices) to assess a random 10% of each collected artifact from the past academic year. These rubrics are calibrated to the performance goals that are embedded in the three student artifacts collected (see Table 9). To facilitate this process, students are asked to upload each artifact to a Moodle shell.

In 2017–2018, 355 (out of 499) students submitted a reflection essay (71%), 247 (out of 403) submitted a reading response (61%), and 270 (out of 403) submitted a research essay for artifact collection (67%). Submission rates for all three artifacts increased from last year’s numbers (which were 53%, 45%, and 66%, respectively). This increase has moved us closer to our ongoing goal of having at least 75% of all enrolled students submit each artifact to Moodle.

In 2017–2018, two full-time faculty (Dr. Carmella Braniger, former coordinator of first-year writing, and Dr. Julie Bates, current coordinator of first-year writing) and two adjunct faculty (Dr. Philip Douglas and Professor Danielle Patricio) assessed student artifacts. For the annual assessment, the assessment team members met for a pre-assessment norming meeting, where they discussed the rubrics, scored sample artifacts using the rubrics, and then compared their scores with each other. They then discussed the similarities and discrepancies among the three scores and used this discussion as a way to generate consensus about using the rubrics.

Assessment team members individually score the artifacts assigned to them at random by Cindie Zelhart; these scores are then given to the coordinator of first-year writing. The coordinator collects the assessment results, graphically depicts the data, analyzes and assesses the data, and writes the annual report. A draft is shared first among the assessment team before being shared with the entire CWRR faculty.

Currently we are using the “traffic signal” performance indicators to evaluate and assess; the rubrics are aligned with these performance indicators and performance goals. Each collected artifact receives a performance indicator using the following scale:

CWRR Artifact Performance Indicators (Scale Based on Percentages):

Nominal (Red—Stop)	Adequate (Yellow—Caution)	Excellent (Green—Go)
0–52%	53–74%	75–100%

Green: A high level indicating clear movement in the right direction, not requiring any immediate change in course of action. Continuing support should be provided.

Yellow: An average, acceptable level indicating either some improvement, but not as quickly as desired, or indicating a slight decline in performance. Strategies and approaches should be reviewed and appropriate adjustments made to reach an acceptable level or desired rate of improvement.

Red: An unacceptable status or direction of change. Immediate, high-priority actions should be taken to address this area.

A Reminder of Performance Goals

The learning outcome goals of the two-course sequence of IN150 and IN151 are as follows:

1. Read critically to comprehend, analyze and evaluate texts
2. Write polished, informed essays for personal, public and/or specialized audiences
3. Conduct research to participate in academic inquiry
4. Reflect on engagements with critical reading, writing and research to acquire, examine and present self-awareness about those engagements.

Table 9: Learning Goals/Artifacts

Data	Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4
Reading Response	X	X		
Research Essay	X	X	X	
Reflection Essay		X		X

Artifact Collection Data

Table 10: Reflection Performance 2009–2018

Academic Year	Identification & articulation of self-awareness 1–5 pts	Critical examination & evaluation of self-awareness 1–5 pts	Presentation of self awareness to public audience 1–5 pts	Total Points (out of 15)
2017–2018	4.23 (85%)	3.67 (73%)	3.72 (74%)	11.63 (78%)
2016–2017	3.65 (73%)	3.38 (68%)	3.16 (63%)	10.19 (68%)
2015–2016	3.75 (75%)	3.47 (69%)	3.41 (68%)	10.63 (71%)
2014–2015	3.66 (73%)	3.39 (68%)	2.7 (54%)	9.77 (65%)
2013–2014	3.5 (70%)	3.3 (66%)	3 (60%)	9.78 (65%)
2012–2013	4.3 (86%)	3.9 (78%)	3.9 (78%)	12 (80%)
2011–2012	4.1 (82%)	3.8 (76%)	4.1 (82%)	12.02 (80%)
2010–2011	Data Missing	Data Missing	Data Missing	Data Missing
2009–2010	2.65 (53%)	2.88 (57.6%)	2.68 (53.6%)	8.74 (58.2%)

Table 11: Reading Response Performance 2009–2018

Academic Year	Reading 1–5 pts	Critiquing 1–5 pts	Writing 1–3 pts	Total Points (out of 13)
2017–2018	3.84 (77%)	3.08 (62%)	2.16 (72%)	9.26 (71%)
2016–2017	4 (80%)	3.45 (69%)	2.37 (79%)	9.83 (76%)
2015–2016	3.50 (70%)	3.10 (62%)	2.40 (80%)	9.00 (70%)
2014–2015	3.03 (61%)	3.36 (67%)	2.26 (75%)	8.65 (66.5%)
2013–2014	3.8 (76%)	3.6 (72%)	2.5 (83%)	9.88 (76%)
2012–2013	3.8 (76%)	3.4 (68%)	2.1 (70%)	9.3 (72%)
2011–2012	3.6 (72%)	3.1 (62%)	2.5 (83%)	9.2 (71%)
2010–2011	Data Missing	Data Missing	Data Missing	Data Missing

2009–2010	3.86 (77%)	3.43 (68.6%)	2.52 (84%)	9.82 (75.5%)
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Table 12: Research Performance 2014–2018

NOTE: A revised rubric has been used with this artifact since 2014–2015.

Academic Year	Research 1–5 pts	Organization 1–5 pts	Audience 1–3 pts	Polished 1–2 pts	Total Points (out of 15)
2017–2018	3.81 (76%)	3.30 (66%)	2.37 (79%)	1.30 (65%)	10.80 (72%)
2016–2017	3.27 (65%)	3.29 (66%)	2.25	1.35 (75%)	10.15 (68%)
2015–2016	3.60 (72%)	3.36 (67%)	2.14 (71%)	1.34 (67%)	10.50 (70%)
2014–2015	3.3 (66%)	3.07 (61%)	1.9 (63%)	1.29 (64.5%)	9.56 (63.7%)

Table 13: Research Performance 2009–2014

Academic Year	Research 1–5 pts	Informed 1–5 pts	Audience 1–3 pts	Polished 1–2 pts	Total Points (out of 15)
2013–2014	3.5 (70%)	3.5 (70%)	2.4 (80%)	1.2 (60%)	10.4 (69%)
2012–2013	3.4 (68%)	3.3 (67%)	2.1 (70%)	1 (51%)	9.8 (65%)
2011–012	3.7 (74%)	3.6 (72%)	2.4 (80%)	1.5 (75%)	11.1 (74%)
2010–2011	Data Missing				
2009–2010	3.87 (77.4%)	3.625 (72.5%)	2.428 (80.9%)	1.642 (82.1%)	11.57

Artifact Analysis

An analysis of the data indicates that 2017–2018 yielded some slight changes to artifact scores. For the first time since 2012–2013, the reflection artifact is in the green. Two of the three artifact average scores increased over the previous year, with the reflection artifact increasing by 10% and the research essay increasing by 4%. The reading response essay decreased 5% this year, which returned it to the yellow. However, all goals are at 72% or better, which shows a continued progress toward moving all scores into the green (a threshold of 75%).

Over the past year, the coordinator of first-year writing has continued to note questions faculty (particularly new full-time and adjunct instructors) have with what precisely each artifact assignment should look like. Genre confusion is evident in some of the artifacts that students submit as well—for instance, assessors noted again this year that some of the reflection artifacts do not actually appear to be reflection essays, as they are lacking a focus on the self and/or reading, writing, etc., and a number of reading response essays resemble critical annotations (which do not fully meet the goals of this artifact) rather than reading response essays/rhetorical analyses. At CWRR & Coffee meetings in 2017–2018, the coordinator of first-year writing brought the Reflection and Reading Response rubrics to faculty to gather suggestions for possible changes in approach to assigning those artifacts and possible revisions to the rubrics themselves. During this year’s artifact assessment process, the coordinator of first-year writing also gathered feedback in regard to the language and setup of the assessment rubrics from the assessment teams. This feedback will be used to address the goals offered in Section 4 below.

Section 4: Suggestions Based 2018–2019 Report

Below are goals for the first-year writing program for the 2018–2019 school year.

1. Faculty Support

A top priority for 2018–2019 is to provide more support to all faculty teaching first-year writing. With an increased pool of adjunct instructors, increasing numbers of faculty teaching Enhanced sections, and a major revision of the Honors sections of first-year writing, providing additional support to these three groups of faculty in particular is a top priority.

This support will take a variety of forms:

- Holding CWRR & Coffee faculty development sessions designed specifically to address the questions, concerns, and needs of adjunct, Enhanced, and Honors faculty
- Increasing promotion of the first-year writing faculty space on Facebook as an electronic space for sharing successes, challenges, questions, etc.
- Developing the first-year writing faculty Moodle space for sharing of assignments, resources, and other best practices
- Conducting more faculty observations to provide support to new adjunct, Enhanced, and Honors faculty
- Revising the first-year writing manual distributed to all faculty (particularly new instructors) to clarify best practices, expectations, artifact guidelines, etc.

2. Artifact Clarifications and Assessment Revisions

Drawing on faculty and assessor feedback gathered in 2017–2018, the first-year writing coordinator will focus on clarifying approaches for teaching, assigning, and assessing the required artifacts during 2018–2019. This includes:

- Proposing revised rubrics to first-year writing faculty, with the goal of securing approval and adoption of the revised rubrics for the 2018–2019 assessment
- Revising the first-year writing manual to clarify what each artifact is and to offer suggestions for possible approaches for assigning each artifact
- Offering faculty development opportunities to clarify guidelines for each artifact and to share best practices for assigning these artifacts
- Providing resources and sample assignments for each artifact to faculty via the department Moodle

3. Increased Access to Technology

The coordinator of first-year writing will continue to seek additional laptops for the new department computer cart that can be checked out by first-year writing faculty. The coordinator will also look for opportunities to advocate for more access to technology—including dedicated computer lab classrooms—for first-year writing classes.

4. Revisions to First-Semester Placement Protocol

Over the past few years, the first-semester placement process has undergone a variety of revisions due to first-year writing coordinator staffing changes and revisions to the registration and orientation processes. After much negotiation with available parties in the Admissions, Registrar's, and Provost's offices, the following process was implemented during 2017–2018 to assess writing for Fall 2018 incoming students:

- The Incoming Student Assessment Team (comprised of Dr. Julie Bates, Dr. Carmella Braniger, Dr. Anne Matthews, and Professor Judi Crowe) developed a writing prompt, which was placed on Moodle for incoming students; a second prompt was developed for students who ran into problems with the first one and needed to undertake a second attempt
- All non-Honors students were contacted in March 2018 by Admissions and asked to submit the writing sample via Moodle by May 1, 2018
- Admissions staff followed up with regular reminders to students to complete the writing prompt through May 1; Admissions staff then continued to encourage students who missed the May 1 deadline to complete the prompt through May 14
- The Incoming Student Assessment Team, which was provided a stipend for their work, assessed all 283 successful submissions in Moodle, placing students in either Enhanced or Traditional IN150 sections, based on inter-rater reliability. The four faculty members read their assigned submissions, rated each one, and then met in person to discuss their ratings and place each student accordingly
- For students who did not submit a writing sample, the Registrar's Office and IT worked to flag any students with ACT sub-scores of 16 or below so those students could be automatically placed in E sections as well.

The steps outlined above resulted in a much smoother and more consistent placement process than in past years. The coordinator of first-year writing plans to consult with the Admissions, Registrar, and Provost's offices in 2018–2019 to implement a similar approach, with slight modifications to further improve the process in terms of communication and timelines with the goal of once again increasing the number of students who successfully submit a writing sample.

Appendix A: Rubrics for Assessment

Reading Response Artifact Assessment Rubric (revised in 2007; 2015)

Millikin University
Critical Writing, Reading and Research Program

Evaluation of CWRR Goal 1 and 2

- “read and critique texts actively, deliberately, and carefully”
- “write . . . polished essays for personal, public, and/or specialized audiences”

Item Evaluated: **Reading Response (Collected in IN 151). Please note that the “reading” can also include a website, film, or other text type determined by the instructor.**

Evaluation by: Self-Study Assessment Team Member

	Excellent (Green—Go)	Adequate (Yellow—Caution)	Nominal (Red—Stop)	Points
Reading	An excellent reading response contains a detailed and careful summary of the major aspects of the reading. Student demonstrates that s/he understands the structure and strategy of the text’s argument and/or play of ideas. [5 points]	An adequate reading response may contain a summary that is slightly confusing or too long/short. The student shows an understanding of the text, but does not actively engage with the structure or strategy of the text’s argument and/or play of ideas. [3 points]	A nominal reading response contains an incomplete summary or misunderstanding of the major aspects of the reading. [1 point]	
Critiquing	An excellent reading response contains careful, well-supported, and well-positioned judgments; similarly, an excellent reading response contains thoughtful, well-reasoned insights about the reading. [5 points]	An adequate reading response contains only some careful, supported and positioned judgments and/or insights regarding the reading. [3 points]	A nominal response contains no judgments or insights about the reading. [1 point]	
Writing	An excellent reading response demonstrates the student’s ability to proofread and edit his or her work. [3 points]	A good reading response demonstrates the student’s attempt to proofread and edit his or her work. [2 point]	A nominal reading response demonstrates the student did not attempt to proofread and edit his work. [1 points]	

Total Points for this Student:

Final Signal Rating:

Excellent (Green—Go)	Adequate (Yellow—Caution)	Nominal (Red—Stop)
10.5–13	7–10.4	1–6

Research Essay Artifact Assessment Rubric (Revised 2015)

Millikin University

Critical Writing, Reading and Research Program Student Learning Evaluation

Evaluation of CWRR Goal 2 and 3

- Conduct research to participate in academic inquiry”
- “write polished, informed essays for personal, public, and/or specialized audiences” Item

Evaluated: **Research Essay (Collected in IN 151)**

Evaluation by: Self-Study Assessment Team Member

	EXCELLENT (GREEN—GO)	ADEQUATE (YELLOW—CAUTION)	NOMINAL (RED—STOP)	POINTS
Research	An excellent research essay demonstrates the student’s abilities to discuss, find, fairly use and synthesize a variety of reliable, academic sources in order to make judgments, analyze, and/or provide insights in ongoing academic conversations and inquiries. [5 points]	An adequate research essay demonstrates inconsistent attempts to find and synthesize a variety of reliable sources. There is an attempt to enter academic conversations. [3 points]	A nominal research essay demonstrates little or no attempt to use and synthesize multiple sources to enter an ongoing academic conversation. [1 point]	
Organization	An excellent research essay demonstrates the student’s abilities to formulate a well-positioned and well-supported argument through strong organization (e.g. clear, relevant introduction, accurate thesis statement or focus, logical transitions, conclusion etc.) [5 points]	An adequate research essay demonstrates the student’s inconsistent attempt to formulate an argument or opinion through moments of confusing organization (e.g. some paragraphs may be lacking topic sentences, the introduction’s attention getter is not clearly tied into the essay’s subject, etc.). [3 points]	Nominal essay demonstrates difficulty in basic organizational skills: no thesis statements, difficult topic sentences, challenging transitions, etc. [1 point]	
Audience	An excellent research essay demonstrates the student’s strong awareness of expectations and interests of specialized or public audiences. [3 points]	An adequate research essay demonstrates the inconsistent awareness of expectations of specialized or public audiences. [2 points]	A nominal essay demonstrates little/no awareness of expectations and interests of specialized/public audiences. [1 point]	
Polished	An excellent research essay demonstrates the student’s ability to compose a properly-documented and carefully edited piece. [2 points]	An adequate research essay reveals a student’s inconsistent documentation and/or a handful of grammatical errors. [1 point]	A nominal research essay demonstrates little or no attempt to edit and to document. [0 points]	

Total Points for this Student:

Final Signal Rating:

Excellent (Green—Go)	Adequate (Yellow—Caution)	Nominal (Red—Stop)
12–15	8–11	1–7

Reflection Artifact Assessment Rubric (revised in 2009, 2013, and 2015)

Millikin University

Critical Writing, Reading and Research Program Student Learning Evaluation

Evaluation of CWRR goals 2 and 4

- “write . . . for personal, public and/or specialized audiences.”
- “reflect on the uses of reading and writing in their public and personal lives to better understand themselves, their communities and the world”

Item Evaluated: **Reflection Essay (Collected in IN 150).**

Evaluation by: Self-Study Assessment Team Member

	EXCELLENT (GREEN—GO)	ADEQUATE (YELLOW—CAUTION)	NOMINAL (RED—STOP)	POINTS
Identification and articulation of Self-awareness	An excellent reflection demonstrates students’ ability to clearly identify and articulate new knowledge about the self and/or reading, writing, and research processes. [5 points]	An adequate reflection demonstrates the student’s attempt to clearly identify and articulate new knowledge about the self and/or reading, writing, and research processes, [3 points]	A nominal reflection lacks attempt to identify and articulate new knowledge about the self and/or reading, writing, and research processes. [1 point]	
Critical examination and evaluation of self-awareness	An excellent reflection demonstrates the student’s ability to critically analyze and evaluate the new knowledge about the self and/or reading, writing, and research processes. [5 points]	An adequate reflection demonstrates the student’s attempt to critically analyze and evaluate the new knowledge about the self and/or reading, writing, and research processes. [3 points]	A nominal reflection lacks attempt to critically analyze and evaluate the new knowledge about the self and/or reading, writing, and research processes. [1 point]	
Presentation of self awareness to a public audience	An excellent reflection demonstrates the student’s ability to present new knowledge about the self to a public audience. [5 points]	An adequate reflection demonstrates the student’s attempt to present new knowledge about the self to a public audience. [3 points]	A nominal reflection lacks attempt to present new knowledge about the self to a public audience. [1 points]	

Total Points for this Student:

Final Signal Rating:

Excellent (Green—Go)	Adequate (Yellow—Caution)	Nominal (Red—Stop)
12–15	8–11	1–7