**Teaching Writing in Wyoming Lost in Transition Colloquium Evaluation Feedback**April 7-8, 2013

UW Outreach Building, Casper

Session Feedback transcribed April 10, 2013 n = 21

***All responses from evaluation forms were transcribed exactly as written.***

***Not all respondents answered all questions.***

1. **Please rate the overall quality of the Teaching Writing in Wyoming Colloquium: (1-10, with 10 being highest quality)**

**mean = 8.5 median = 8 mode = 8**

**Comments:**

* Maybe too much to cover in one day
* Wish wi-fi was stronger and no pork for lunch (both meals had pork-too much!) Liked the breakout session and the format. Why not put this online too?
* The keynote speaker was very good and the discussion questions promoted good ideas and conversations
* I love the opportunity to have meaningful conversations with colleagues from different grade levels.
* Would have enjoyed more discussion related to the reading and assignments brought. Hoped to leave with more ideas for modification.
* I‘ll leave with many thoughts. Could we, though, ask speakers to not rush. This was a bit disconcerting.
* I feel you do a nice job making every voice be heard and allowing comfortable conversation.
* I really liked what Steve Newton had to say!! He was spot on!
* It was very helpful although I am a middle school teacher and much of the issues seemed at a higher level.
* Overall good info w/ the focus on research and ACT but how can we start in the MS. Make it relevant to these young students and scaffold w/the HS
* Always enjoy this learning opportunity.
* This venue TWW is an experience that has always proved professionally beneficial; this year has been especially excellent!
* Enjoyed presentation
* Thank you!
* Thank you!
* I would have given a rating of ‘10’ perhaps if the conference hadn’t been abbreviated because of the storm. I would have liked more discussion time.

1. **If you attended the Sunday night dinner with Michael Knievel, please rate the Sunday night discussion. (1-10, with 10 being highest quality)**

**mean = 8.7 median = 9 mode = 10**

**Comments:**

* Interesting ideas that could be very connected to research, especially modern research. Would like to see this discussion continued on Monday.
* N/A
* I really liked the article and how it relates to students and every day life. Michael started off slow but got in his comfort zone and was fun and interesting to listen to.
* Interesting table discussions as off-shoots of the conversation: important topic to be thinking about. What the next steps should be – how do we channel and utilize the skills kids have
* N/A
* N/A
* Michael was so interesting.
* Dinner was great, discussion at our tables were great, engaging and thought provoking.
* N/A
* N/A
* Loved the article and conversation
* N/A
* I don't usually get to sit down and discuss academic issues with UW staff so I really enjoyed this. I was disappointed that more school people did not attend. The discussion about attention capital was very interesting.
* I found the notion of an “economy of attention” quite interesting. With respect to student research, I worry that the notion of student distractibility is/can be a red herring when addressing student pitfalls.

1. **What insights or reactions did you have to the morning’s whole-group session about “college and career ready” research?**

* Time is very important when there are so many outside pressures on educators.
* I wish I had his handouts so I could see his slides while he discussed them – it was difficult to see and he rightfully did not read them, but I really wanted them in front of me.
* I really liked Stephen’s comments. I think he is on to something in connecting various issues in education. This is obviously a driven method to try to show results or improve results.
* He sounded assured about his plan, but the impressive part was that he is implementing his plan.
* I appreciated the reminder…. If you expect them to do it, you must teach it.
* Terrific speaker-principal
* Learned some great ideas about how to model for my students – but when do we stop providing framework and expect them to do it on their own?
* Great!
* High school principal perspective was great because high school is the jumping off point to college – I’m fairly certain that many are jaded because of the state of U.S. education, but I hope we were listening and applying what was valuable to the stage we teach to.
* At a lower teaching level, elementary, prior knowledge building is hit so heavy seeing how it can hinder research and purpose of proving instead of what students think they know to research and prove with evidence.
* It was nice to hear what other schools are doing.
* The session was great. The information was useful and helped to connect the meaning of CCSS, ACT, etc. Also, his views on how to move to deeper meaning of research/learning
* I agree that we need to bridge the important assessments: ACT, PAWS, level assessments to ensure students success
* Steve gave me a lot to think about. He validated many of my beliefs – I do wonder about teaching towards one form of evaluation (assessment) – but Steve showed how to connect the standards & to see ACT Readiness as standards.
* I wish Steve was my principal!
* Recognizing the difference between assigning and teaching. Unpacking skills ACT privileges vs. test prep experience
* Very eye-opening and personally pertinent
* Info on ACT – Difference between giving an assignment and helping students to complete a task independently
* Loved Steve's session - very helpful and informative. I wanted to know more about what he did to get his school there. One slide mentioned a school wide literacy focus but he didn't elaborate. Insights included merging our many obligations, embedded is not adequate - it has to be explicit, there is a technique to everything, and the many resources in the ACT materials that we have - but we don't use it.  This gave me some direction for working with teachers.
* On the whole, I suppose I already believed this: a student is “college & career ready” when she has developed the capacity to think critically.

1. **What morning session did you attend? What insights or reactions did you have from the morning session?**

**Session 2.1: Building interdisciplinary projects – Mick Wiest and Nyana Sims**

*6 participants from evaluations*

* The importance of multimodal projects
* My reaction was our school is on the track to do some of these ideas!
* This was great! So important for students to find relevance in an assignment.
* Time is an issue – finding time to collaborate & design authentic interdisciplinary outcomes.
* Focus on purpose & providing relevant audiences for students. Allow students to understand literacy as purposeful and connected to other disciplinary content
* So great ideas for possible projects

**Session 2.2: Exploring and building towards college-level research assignment prompts – Brianna Wright**

*9 participants from evaluations*

* Students reading and comprehending college writing prompts because they do not represent the steps of the writing process – they represent the thought process the instructor wants the student to experience. This is different from they’re used to.
* I think research needs to be designed to push kids out of their comfort zones. Kids need to be able to think critically and go further with topics.
* Maybe a bit of an agenda would be helpful.
* K-12 and college have completely different concepts of how the process of research works and should be taught.
* I was surprised that few instructors brought assignments with for discussion – I would have liked to see more assignment examples. Great discussions at my table.
* Liked to see what professors are giving so that my students can understand and know how to approach it when they get there – also how we need to tune ours up to make them closer
* How essential student choice is
* Many of us found the sample prompts very difficult to navigate as adults. The instructors' goal was not always clear/ For that reason, the session was disappointing, but our table had good conversations.

**Session 2.3: Moving past comprehension to synthesis/evaluation – Todd Reynolds and Leslie Rush**

4 *participants from evaluations*

* Teaching synthesis at not “synthesis”
* This session allowed me to think of synthesis differently which I hope will really influence my teaching.
* I realized that my projects/research are very lower level-summary based. I also received many ideas of how to move into a synthesis level.
* I wonder if I do teach synthesis of material explicitly. How would I do that? A student needs a framework against which to synthesize ideas.

1. **What afternoon session did you attend? What insights or reactions did you have from the afternoon session?**

**Session 3.1: Developing engaging purposes and audiences – George Kamberelis**

*7 participants from evaluations*

* Remember to share the info gathered and compiled.
* I can take the ideas of others to deepen the level/rigor in research projects
* George did a nice job facilitating conversation!
* Multiple levels of purpose. You can combine teacher purpose w/ student purpose. Be transparent w/ students.
* really enjoyed George's insightful direction for this session and the sharing from participants. One insight was regarding purposes "to argue, to explain" etc. instead of "argument, explanation", etc.  I left the session 10 minutes early to drive home.

**Session 3.2: Promoting critical evaluation of sources/Rethinking the research process – Jennifer Lamborn**

*11 participants from evaluations*

* We had to leave right away due to driving conditions
* Research is a difficult skill/process for students to learn. Is the process or product more important?
* We had a great open discussion in which we shared common concerns. More importantly that conversation led to some exciting group insights.
* Reminder of senior thesis, process is product
* It was very interesting to consider what research means and recall why it is essential & exciting. Session a little slow-paced, but informative.
* How the final project may sabotage the research process.
* Process is more important than product
* Look at research differently for students to understand the process, value, and joy of research. Remove project based research move towards critical thinking research.
* Honestly, I was worried about the weather. ☹
* I sort of checked out at this time sorry. ☹
* Discussion of research – maybe just do the learning & not worry about a final project
* The challenge of evaluating the process of research vs. the product. How?

1. **Based on today’s discussions, what is one thing you will try in your class(es) right away?**

* N/A
* I will try to be more concrete in research design to provide authentic pieces where students can dive deep. Give students opportunities or situations to succeed in & tell about through research.
* I need to refocus on emphasizing research process over research product.
* Planning a multimodal aspect of the research paper/ project for next year.
* Do a better job scaffolding & modeling how to research
* How the final project may sabotage the research process
* Next year – teaching research as its own unit
* Integration of teaching and modeling “how to “summarize or evaluate – “how am I showing what this question is asking me to do?”
* Change my implementation of both research and synthesis
* Look at ACT.org.
* Teach explicit skills instead of assuming knowledge.
* Providing sources for research project (ms students)
* Interdisciplinary units.
* As a facilitator: Work with administration on approaching ACT prep as an unpacking & teaching of essential skills
* Good article, bad article, okay article
* Meet with PLC’s and work on units – work on researching with students – improve
* ACT materials that we have but don't use, reframing purpose for writing as a verb instead of a noun, the four questions in analyzing a writing prompts (shared by a participant in morning session).
* I will try Stephen Newton’s mini-lesson to block plagiarism although blocking plagiarism is not my objective. I’d like to try “summary & synthesis” on demand. (time constraint)

1. **Based on today’s discussions, what challenges do you see with integrating the Common Core State Standards?**

* Are they explicitly tied to other assessments enough? Do teachers understand the impact/purpose? How can college/university faculty use CCSS to be prepared for the students they get?
* I think they are important to integrate but have to be part of the experience, not an add on or a separate until/lesson.
* N/A
* Assessment/alignment w/act
* I don’t think we discussed this
* N/A
* People think they are something else that will go away – the nice thing is that having kids “prove it” like the standards say really shows kids successful thinking strategies
* The challenge is to group the change of thinking to allow the common core to be implemented correctly to build critical thinkers.
* I really liked some of the texts that I could read/look out to get better idea.
* I don’t see the standards as a challenge. Many of them we already do/teach. The challenge comes in choosing power standards & getting other contents to actively teaching LA standards.
* I really don’t see it as challenging I think standards have generally stayed the same but they are now imbedded throughout all disciplines
* Time to design – assessments
* Time to implement!
* Focusing on what students need as opposed to what teachers want to teach. Teaching techniques to allow for independent learning & application as opposed to assigning isolated activities.
* Content area teachers who will be required to teach LA standards and feel unprepared and like it is not their job.
* My students should be able to comprehend more complex texts (according to CCS). Although I ask them to read, “stretch texts,” I’m concerned about their readiness when they graduate high school.

1. **What do you see as the next steps for Teaching Writing in Wyoming conference in future years?**

* Less can be more. I would like more time to dig in to the topics brought up.
* This was a good conference. I believe it would be useful for more of these conversations to be had involving more people to get this conversation going all over to sate. We will need this information.
* N/A
* More work on writing across the curriculum & reach out to content area teachers beyond language arts
* “Creating something new “\_” creating a new world” – helping students by teaching what matters – providing valuable experiences (what are they?)
* No ideas at present
* Needs to be better publicized to teachers
* Not sure-
* Have teachers put on workshops w/ specific writing assignments/ rubrics/ scores/successes . . .
* Planning for common language-
* Developing students’ academic vocabularies, teaching as apprenticeship
* Next year - Common Core especially in the content areas.  Raising the bar in writing.
* Perhaps an examination/explanation of the connection between reading across the curriculum & writing across the curriculum.

1. **If the Partnership were to offer a Lost in Transition Colloquium focused on literature in the fall, would you be likely to attend?**

15 responded YES

3 responded Maybe (1 wrote “depends on date”)

0 responded NO

* 1. **If yes, what kind of information would you like to see at such a meeting?**
* Sharing in small groups of what others do in their classrooms.
* How could I tie in literature to social studies? Implementing historical fiction writing.
* Why do we teach literature? What do we solve in the study of literature? How does that in todays world of factory educators
* What/why is this valuable across levels & disciplines?
* No ideas at present
* What does Lost in Transition mean?
* What roles do all content areas have in focusing on literacy? How can we work together?
* Helping our struggling students – Hispanic students (how do we create experiences that encourage our Hispanic & native American students to progress in literacy)
* Building bridges between classical & contemporary lit.
* Possibly would attend - not sure what you mean by a Lost in Transition Colloquium.  Could it be tied to the Fall Literacy Conference?  If it focuses on literature, I would expect the focus to be CCSS and literature reading and writing.
* Teaching literary theory to h.s. students. Instructors sharing favorite texts & rationales for teaching these texts – exploration of literary nonfiction.