

# COMMENTING

## ON STUDENT

# WRITING

### TIPS & GUIDELINES

#### GENERAL TONE & VOICE

# 1

Make your language clear and accessible. Avoid anger or sarcasm in your comments. Aim towards helping the student understand the grade, as well as helping them learn how to do better next time. Address positive comments to the writer, and negative comments to the paper.

#### MARGINAL COMMENTS

# 2

Address local concerns: logic, clarity, accuracy, continuity of ideas, etc. Offer compliments as well as critique. Do not lapse into wholesale correction or editing--provide comments, and avoid debating content unless their content is factually incorrect.

#### GRAMMAR & SPELLING

# 3

Use a list of symbols or abbreviations for quick grammar/spelling/mechanic notations. Comment only where meaning is impeded by grammar issues, or where sentence is not understandable. Avoid making all corrections yourself--instead, comment on recurring errors and correct a few as samples.

#### END COMMENTS

# 4

Address student by first name. Stay supportive. Point out what the writer has done well. Focus on two or three major problems of the piece to be fixed. Challenge the writer to deepen their thinking. Provide practical suggestions. Reference grading rubric or assignment sheet.

#### FURTHER RESOURCES

# 5

Recommend further resources for the student, based on the major issues you see for improvement. Direct them to the Writing Center, online tutoring, your preferred Online Writing Lab, etc. For examples of discipline-specific writing resources, contact the Director of Liberal Studies and Communications or your Program Director.