

ENG 010, Fall 2017 Lessons Learned

Over the course of our first fall implementation, ENG 010 instructors met regularly to share observations and insights, and to problem-solve. Here are some of the common stumbling blocks (sometimes outright road blocks) we saw, as well as what we learned about the assists that help students become confident and resilient college-level writers.

Blocks	Boosts & Bridges
Assignment anxieties	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice navigating D2L course sites and reliably locating assignments, units, etc.• Annotating assignment descriptions/instructions to map out its parts• Encouragement and openings to ask questions• Seeing that other students have questions too—and hearing what those are• Help with HOW to ask questions• <i>Note: Obviously it is important for teachers to provide thoughtful, connected assignment instructions. But trying to construct “iron-clad” instructions is not recommended. It’s nigh to impossible to anticipate all questions, and thinking through assignments alongside visualizing <u>their</u> processes, and realizing questions is a key “studenting” skill.</i>
Goal-setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice with SMART goal-setting: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results-focused, Timely!• Talking through and breaking down the larger assignment into steps and smaller decisions needed, in order needed: “First I need to”• Becoming more aware of language/terms for naming parts and stages in their writing and research process and products• Practice hearing and using such terms across assignments, learning environments, disciplines
Time management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seeing how others use physical or digital planners, calendars, D2L alerts, etc. to juggle assignments across several courses, plus work, plus . . .• Budgeting time for the steps that they’ve broken their assignment into• Learning when and how to speed up or slow down• Being aware of life/work constraints and being specific and realistic about problem-solving around those
Formula-dependence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activities and assignments that develop student agency by requiring and validating rhetorical question-asking and decision-making• Practice with rhetorical thinking about writers, audiences, texts/genres/sources—both in course readings and in their own writing and research assignments• <i>Note: While “fill-in-the-blank” type assignments or providing (or reinforcing) formulas when faced with struggling students can be tempting, thus taking agency away from students does not help them learn to seek and evaluate options and develop confidence in their decisions as writers.</i>
Atomistic approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repeatedly looking at textbook chapters, unit calendar, overview, and assignment instructions to see and articulate connections between assignments: daily activities and readings, PA/SWAs, MWAs• Repeatedly discussing and reflecting on skills, processes, and genres used earlier and later across different assignments: within a single course, across different sections, in the next English course, moving into courses outside of English, and even projecting to students’ future professional communications

