Teaching Intellectual Teamwork in WAC Courses through Peer Review
Jim Henry and Lehua Ledbetter

Abstract
Now that the writing-across-the-curriculum (WAC) movement is firmly in place on hundreds of college campuses, courses that leverage writing to enhance the learning of disciplinary content and conventions are quite common. Perhaps less common among instructional practices is peer review, a technique often used in introductory composition courses. Because faculty outside of Composition Studies may be less familiar with teaching techniques for peer review, this teaching report provides an introduction to the literature on peer review and a review of WAC sources supporting its use. Against the backdrop of this introduction, we offer a case study of our own approach when teaching introductory composition, with excerpts from students’ written performances to illustrate the processes and to support our claims about its efficacy. An appended table offers our step-by-step process for positioning students to review their peers’ writing; this process can be adapted to other disciplines and other goals.

Keywords
peer review, collaborative learning, response to writing, modeling, metacognition

Introduction: Defining Terms and Clearing Misconceptions
A recent article in the Chronicle of Higher Education (Anderson, 2010), “Peer Editing Could Use Some Revision,” offers a snapshot of (mis)understandings of the practice of peer review. The article offers some guidelines for “peer-editing” sessions, yet as readers’ comments reveal, the term itself is ill-chosen. Most scholars in Composition Studies reserve the term “peer editing” for only the last stage in the writing process, after higher order issues of purpose, audience considerations, and disciplinary conventions have been addressed (Cahill, 2002; Grimm, 1986; Holt, 1992). “Peer review” or “peer response” refers to this practice of positioning students more broadly to respond to one another’s writing to enhance understandings of such “higher order concerns” (Paton, 2002; Purdue OWL, n.d.; Rose, 1985). Writing instructors across the disciplines can fruitfully position students as peer editors—and we offer a strategy for doing so as part of our case study—but it is important to distinguish this practice from those peer reviews that contribute to learning to write and learning to...
think within a specific discipline. One poster’s response to Anderson’s article speaks to the importance of this distinction: identifying two proofreading errors in the article and asking how many of her students would have been capable of catching them, the poster concludes with “My guess would be none[…] … Admittedly against nearly all recent thought to the contrary, I see little value in ‘peer editing,’ for it is almost never editing at all” (profpeter, 2010, n.p.a.).

Yet students can catch errors, just as they can contribute valuable responses to one another’s evolving writing in earlier stages, as we demonstrate below. Key to enabling them to do so is to indicate precisely the kinds of response expected for each review and to frame the review sessions carefully with respect to the assignment and course expectations. Such teaching requires some extra time in preparation and classroom execution (see Spear, 1998; Woods, 2002), and we acknowledge (along with a reviewer of an earlier draft of this article) that faculty in the disciplines may be loath to dedicate time to peer review if it seems to detract from class time devoted to “content.” Yet we hope that by the end of this article, readers will agree that peer review can actively contribute to teaching content, thus justifying the time spent on it. Our approach suggests soliciting collaboration from the campus writing center, which might also help instructors enhance connections with campus support for writing.

Scholarship on Peer Review in Writing Across the Curriculum

Analyzing peer response to writing in an anthropology course in 1991, Herrington and Cadman arrived at the following conclusions:

1. Peer review can create occasions for active and reciprocal decision-making where students are their own authorities, not the teacher. Instead of following a peer’s or even a teacher’s advice uncritically, they feel more latitude to decide for themselves how to act, specifically how they will respond to a peer’s response. Indeed, the value of peer-review exchanges can be realized as much in instances where a writer decides not to follow a peer’s advice as where she does.

2. Students can give sound advice to their peers, even on matters they are having difficulty with in their own writing.

3. Writers can profit both from the response they receive about their own drafts and from reading the drafts of others.

4. In peer-review exchanges, students focus not only on matters of organization and style, but also on substantive matters of interpretation and methods of inquiry central to learning in a given discipline. As they do so, they are working out their own understandings of methodologies, ways to interpret information, and ways to present themselves in their writing. (p. 184)

Recent studies have confirmed that peer review has proven a valuable resource for instructors across the disciplines. One study of over 300 writing-intensive courses in the natural and applied sciences showed that instructors who included peer-reviewing among their practices were more successful in engaging students in writing (Chinn & Hilgers, 2000). In another study, undergraduate science students who engaged in Web-mediated peer review of toxicology reports made more revisions that improved their reports than those who reviewed their own drafts (Trautmann, 2009). Cho, Shunn, and Wilson (2006) have found that students are able to provide reliable and valid “rating” of writing when using the same rubric as the instructor, and Patchan, Charney, and Schunn (2009) have found that comments from instructors and students to drafts were “relatively similar,” even though instructors were understandably more adept in providing content-specific feedback. Artemeva and Logie (2002) examined the role of peer feedback (referred to as “intellectual team-
work”) in aiding written and oral communication in engineering students. Having elicited suggestions from students, they developed a peer feedback strategy that increased the amount of feedback addressing higher-order concerns—issues of “organization and evaluation”—from the first to the final drafts of a writing assignment.

In sum, the literature demonstrates that students can provide valid responses to their peers and can even collaborate with instructors to develop strategies for addressing higher-order concerns. When peer review is practiced, students engage more with their own writing and produce more substantive revision. Based on such scholarship, writing-across-the-curriculum practitioners have established a number of guidelines to help instructors provide skillful and attentive guidance to peer review. The online WAC Clearinghouse at Colorado State University, noted in the references, includes pages devoted exclusively to such guidelines. The case study that follows offers an application of tenets found there for our specific course and discipline yet adaptable to other disciplines while maintaining core features.

Applying the 3 M’s—Multiple Technologies, Meta-Commentary, and Modeling—in a Composition Course Focused on Sustainability

Jim Henry, the instructor for the course, was assisted by Lehua Ledbetter, who was then a master’s student in English and working as a writing mentor to students in the class by attending all classes with them and conducting regular out-of-class conferences, a valuable part of our learning strategy that employed a process approach to writing. Her role was important in enabling this successful staging of peer review, and we suggest that instructors across the disciplines contact their campus writing centers to request a tutor who can similarly help set up the peer review. Most centers will be familiar with the recent trend toward “on-location tutoring” (Spigelman & Grobman, 2005) and will probably welcome the collaboration. (And though approaches to peer review can vary significantly, an instructor equipped with this article and ideas about how s/he would like to deploy peer review could very likely find a willing collaborator through the writing center, WAC offices, or writing fellows, depending upon local structures.) Below we offer specifics on the rationale and uses of each of our 3 Ms to support such collaboration.

Multiple Technologies

Our first-year composition course focused on sustainability, and Jim sought to stress this theme not only through course activities but also through course delivery. The syllabus was online, and the course also had a password-protected site on the university’s Web forum. Most readings were posted there, and students were informed at the outset that they would be using this resource heavily, posting regularly online. Because this was not a distance learning course, however, we wanted to maximize the advantages of face-to-face meetings to firmly establish the guidelines for peer review and closely monitor student application of those guidelines.

We began with pen and paper in class: we wanted to dramatize this moment to assure strong engagement and to support student mastery of the practice, because the intellectual teamwork that we sought to nurture would depend very much on positioning students as valuable respondents to one another. We did not have many pen-and-paper moments in the classroom outside of peer review sessions, but for those sessions it proved key: we could circulate as students responded to one another and discern at a glance whether students were adding ample hand-written commentary on their peers’ drafts. Determining if this commentary was valuable to student writers—for us as instructors as well as for student authors—occurred in follow-up exercises that shifted back to using our online course space, as will be illustrated below. This meshing of technologies...
also enabled careful sequencing of assignments that followed up quickly on the in-class response to help us teach effective peer review.

Our introductory composition course targeted student learning outcomes that included an ability to compose texts that achieve a specific purpose and demonstrate an awareness of audience. We devised the mnemonic of “aim, audience, and authorship” to encompass these outcomes and to position students as the authors who would be writing frequent metacommentary for their writing by using this mnemonic. We explained the concept of “authorship” as encompassing the image or persona that the student writer would project of him- or herself, thus invoking considerations of tone, style, and voice, as well as of usage and grammar. This metacommentary consisted of cover memos for each draft to be reviewed, in which the author discussed his or her intentions for each of the categories and for each specific assignment. Peer reviewers could then compare their readings of drafts with authors’ stated intentions to provide feedback. We elaborate on this practice and its grounding below with a particular eye to aim, audience, and authorship, as these concepts can be taught across disciplines.

Metacommentary

The use of metacommentary as part of peer review is grounded in research on metacognition, a key part of cognitive processes and problem solving as demonstrated by research in psychology (Efklides, 2001; Flavell, 1979). Within cognitive psychology, it is “generally accepted that metacognition is a model of cognition, which acts at a meta-level and is related to the object-world” (Efklides, 2006, p. 4). Metacommentary extends this definition: metacognitive writing is writing at the meta-level that is related to the object-world of the writer’s audience as part of a problem-solving approach to learning. Efklides (2006) supports the argument of metacognition’s potential to enhance collaborative problem solving, noting that students pick up and learn from each other’s meta-experience (ME) cues:

…collaborating peers in problem solving co-regulate their learning on cues from ME of their partner. Salonen, Vauras, and Efklides (2005) further showed this effect of ME that reveals the social aspect of metacognition. Thus, ME are [sic] an essential component of the self-regulation process as well as of the co-regulation or shared-regulation of cognition. (p. 9)

To achieve the positioning of students as successful collaborating peers, we knew that we would need to guide their uses of metacommentary very carefully. To do so, we first explained the concept; then we showed some examples of metacommentary written for drafts by students in previous sections of the course. We stressed that students should write at least one good paragraph each on their intended aim(s), authorship, and audience, pointing to specific places in their drafts, if possible. The paragraphs could designate both successful performances and those needing further attention to enlist respondents as co-problem solvers. Students were to arrive in class with their printed-out drafts and metacommentary ready for peer review.

Modeling

“Modeling” is a valued pedagogical technique, as evidenced by the use of modeling in a range of disciplines: for example, structural models enhance learning in engineering classes, while real-world models assist the application of formulas in mathematics. In writing instruction, modeling refers to a practice in which students are encouraged to interact with more experienced writers and their texts. In doing so, students might refine their own composing practices. In addition to an instructor’s models, a peer can offer models that other students observe and from which they learn. In social-cognitive theory, Bandura (1997) established the value of social interaction to enhance learning, insisting that peer models “can operate as a potent force in
the development and social validation of intellectual self-efficacy” (p. 234). As a force central to authorship, self-efficacy contributes to students’ learning of writing skills.

To set up our modeling of peer review for the class, we each composed a two-page draft for the first assignment complete with metacommentary, exchanged our drafts, and composed copious commentary in longhand, filling the margins with comments and writing a paragraph of summary response at the end. The assignment was called a “geo-biography,” defined on the online syllabus as “an autobiography that includes reflections on the way your life to date has been shaped by the geographies you have lived in or visited” and that could include places “as intimate as your desk at home, your kitchen table, or your favorite place to meditate.” It was conceptualized to achieve specific goals: familiarizing students with one another to begin building a classroom learning community; tapping the research and teaching in the subfield of eco-composition to stress “place” as it shapes human subjectivity; and establishing this grounding in “place” as a cornerstone for later assignments. The first draft was to be two pages maximum, single-spaced, with a space between paragraphs. Once we had composed longhand responses to each other’s drafts, we scanned these responses into a PDF to be deployed during class.

Students had been required to post their drafts complete with metacommentary to the password-protected class Web site the day before the session devoted to peer review. Reviewing these drafts quickly, Jim had placed students in groups of three, using topics, approaches, or other identifiable features to determine these groups. In class, he stressed that this procedure would recur throughout the semester and that the rationale for grouping would shift with assignments and with individual performances that demonstrated authors’ specific strengths and challenges. Then he projected Lehua’s response to his draft onto a screen so that students could view the comments and so that he and Lehua could talk about them. (See Figures 1 and 2.) We deliberately set up this session as highly performative—revealing the responses and discussing them rather than distributing them on paper—because we did not want students to emulate the form so much as the collaborative task of problem solving, the “intellectual teamwork.” The “problem” that they would be helping each other solve was then revealed: help your authors expand from two pages to four.

Students then set about reviewing each other’s work. As they responded using pen or pencil, we each circulated to answer questions and guide the activity. At the end of a class period of 50 minutes, every student had a completed a handwritten review for a peer. They then had three homework assignments: (1) scan these drafts filled with handwritten response and upload them to the class Web site; (2) compare their own performance as a respondent with those of Jim or Lehua (which were being uploaded to the class website as they worked) and at least one other student; and (3) write a paragraph or two about how they planned to expand their drafts to reach four pages.

The initially uploaded drafts with metacommentary showed that the large majority of students understood the logic underpinning metacommentary and performed within this genre quite adeptly. In discussing his intentions for eliciting a specific response from his audience, for example, one student wrote:

I hope to elicit at least a little amusement in my writings. I understand that I am a rather dull individual, so feelings of excitement and humor are often void in my writings.

The account did indeed include amusing anecdotes, and his respondent countered his assertion that he was “dull,” concluding his summary comments with “btw, it’s not boring!” In addition, the peer reviewer pointed out how the author could enhance the draft by re-orga-
Meta-Commentary for Geo-Biography

In this first draft, I was really trying to capture what it was like to grow up in a small town in a poor and remote state in the 1950s and 1960s. I ran out of room because we were limited to two pages, but I'm curious as to what my readers(s) think of it. Did the story about the dead guy take up too much space? I think maybe I did a decent job of representing the time period, but I'm not sure I did a very good job of representing the town where I grew up. I also didn't talk about one of the most important places in my high school life—the field house where I played basketball as part of the state champion Big Reds! 😊 Maybe I should junk the dead man and talk more about that? I also didn't talk much about being an ardent student, but that's partly because I didn't want to come across as the predictable college professor. What parts do you want to hear more about, and what parts (if any) should I cut? I also didn't really do any research the way Dennis Kawaharada did. Do you think that would make it better? If so, do you see any possible places where I could insert some?

Authorship
I'm trying not to come across as the stereotypical English professor (whatever that is), and I'm also trying to create a narrator that students will be able to relate to at least a little bit, despite our differences in age. I tried to write in everyday language, but once or twice I think I waxed academic. I also wanted to "teach" just a bit, since I'm writing in the dual role of author and teacher, so I tried to approach the notion of place in a way that I'll be able to connect back to when we get to later assignments. I guess my narrator is partly a historian, too, when he reflects on specific conditions during that time period.

Audience
I see the students in the class in my mind's eye as I write, and it seems that most of them are from Hawai'i. That caused me to add the references to temperatures and snow, to emphasize what winter is like in that part of the country. (I'll be interested to see if Sara or Maryam include any similar kinds of details.) In this sense, I guess I should have added "geography teacher" to my authorship. I don't want to come across as a geography lecturer, but rather as a kid who remembers the details of weather, climate, and seasons, the way almost all kids do. (Or at least did, before the computer age.)

Aim (Purpose)
I wanted to humanize myself so that students can see that we really do have a lot of stuff in common. I also wanted to tell a spooky story well, once I remembered it. (Did you get chicken skin?) As I said above, I also wanted to teach a bit, but without lecturing. I am super conscious of how different my life was from my audience because of the different eras in which our respective childhoods transpired, and I want that to come through. I think it's an important part of why we set the course up this way: how do we go back through our histories, and the histories before them, to build knowledge on the places we have lived, and where we will continue to live, in ways that help us make decisions that keep those places—and an honoring of them—in mind? Not sure if that part came across as well as I like, but once again, I don't want to "lecture."

Figure 1. Peer Review on Metacommentary
Jimi Hendrix, Bill Bradley, and a Small Town Boy

I was born in Parkersburg, West Virginia, in 1952, of ancestors from Scotland on my dad’s side and Germany (I think) on my Mom’s. Parkersburg is a small town of 40,000 people on the Ohio River, and the main economy is tied to the chemical industry. My earliest memories of the small red-brick house we lived in include a side porch with honeysuckle vines that smelled great in summer, and a big vegetable garden in the back yard. I remember my mom and dad tilling the garden by using one of those one-blade tillers meant to be pulled by a donkey or horse. Instead, my dad pulled it along in front with a rope and my mom guided it. Like just about every other family in the summer, we would can vegetables and fruits from the garden during the summer so that we would have some variety in the winter. (This time period was before frozen foods had become common and way before the mass marketing of microwave ovens.)

When I was eight, my uncle gave our family a television, and we were the first on the block to own one. With its antenna (cable had not yet been commercialized) we got the three major networks, and programming ran from about 9 a.m. until 10 p.m., when stations would sign off and play the “Star Spangled Banner,” then default to white noise and snow. (Speaking of snow, another early memory was of a huge snow storm that eventually left four feet of snow and closed down schools for a week, during which we went sledding every day, using everything from trash can lids to real “Flyer” sleds that you could actually steer—somewhat.) My other early memories are of endless summer days that would culminate in twilight games of kick the can under the yellow glow of the streetlight, followed by a few minutes of heaving handfuls of gravel up towards the light to watch the bats dive bomb them.

As towns go, Parkersburg was okay growing up—in that era there was very little crime, we had good public schools, and the economy of the whole nation was starting to boom. My dad’s job on the DuPont loading dock kept getting better and better because of the booming economy, so that when I was eleven, our family was able to move from the “wrong side of the tracks” to the north side of town. My mom was a school teacher and both my parents were big on education. The better schools were on north end, and my mom convinced dad to move.

At my new school (McKinley!), each grade had different levels, and even though I had mostly A’s on my report cards at my previous school, they put me in the slow section. I was also tall and a little goofy looking (partly because my dad insisted on cutting my hair to save money and he was lousy at it), so I stuck out in a crowd. It felt like everybody—kids and teachers alike—sort of expected me to be the big dumb kid, and for a while I was content with being just that. For some reason, I also quickly became the target of the school bully, a greaser who had flunked twice. While most of the rest of us were twelve, he was fourteen, and he delighted in attacking boys who were smaller than he was. Even though I wasn’t really smaller, the two years made a difference, and after I came home with a bloody nose the second time, my mom went to the school to talk to the principal. Two days later, I

Figure 2. Peer Review on Draft
nizing: “you tend to jump from one subject to another then return to the first and hop again.”

This comment reflected Jim’s major critique of the student author’s geo-biography draft, which had been sent to the student by e-mail following the class peer review session. In fact, the first draft was very good, which the peer reviewer had noted: “Excellent use of vocabulary and diction. You have a strong voice in your writing as well as a poetic one!” However, the fact that both instructor and peer respondent had pointed out organizational problems confirmed for the student author that he should address this issue in revision:

In order to revise and expand my draft, I need to mentally outline my geo-biography better, arranging each different subject in a manner that will bring smooth transitions to the next subject. Flash-forwards and flashbacks just might be the trick!

Not all students performed well as respondents, yet in comparing their performances with others and writing a formal reflection on them, nearly all students were able to take stock of their shortcomings. For example, the weakest respondent in the class on this first attempt wrote this:

I feel that going into the peer review I had the wrong view on what my job was when reviewing her paper. Now looking back I feel that I did not do a very good job at all when reviewing it. When first reading her geo-biography I was very impressed by her writing skills and the amount of detail she used when writing. When reading her paper I could almost visualize the scenes she was describing in my head. Therefore I only focused on the positive things she did and made comments mostly about how our schools were similar. I feel that I could’ve looked deeper and found things that could’ve helped her improve her paper. I hope that next time we do a peer review that I can do a much better job [...]… Jim also was able to notice the great use of detail that [the student author] used in her paper but along with the positive remarks he provided good suggestions for her to improve her paper, which I did not do.

In fact, this student did improve significantly as a reviewer in later sessions, evidence that this modeling and reflection upon performance with respect to the models enhanced students’ abilities to provide valuable feedback as peer reviewers.

Another bonus from such attention to peer review is that when students focus strongly on providing constructive feedback, they often realize that they can follow another student’s example in revising their own drafts, a point made by Herrington and Cadman above. In stating her plans for revising, one student said this:

I’ll include more visual details, to paint a better picture into my reader’s mind. I saw that when I read [another student’s] paper, I really had a fantastic picture in my mind when I read that opening paragraph of hers. I want to be able to do that throughout my entire paper.

Peer review can thus produce student learning that goes far beyond any one-directional flow of information; effectively mined, peer review can help student learners discern their own shortcomings and ways to surmount them without instructors’ instructions, an invaluable component of any classroom and one to which we return in the concluding section.

The importance of modeling cannot be overemphasized, because through our peer review guidelines and the models (and modeling) that accompany them, we can confirm that all participants have a clear idea of what is expected. In his reflections on his performance, one student put this element in perspective: “Truthfully, this had been one of my first times participating in a peer review, since my school did not really do this, so I really tried hard to help my partner in any way possible.” Most likely students writing across the curriculum will have had a wide variety of previous experiences in
Implementing Peer Review Across the Curriculum

Our initial scenario for peer review might have seemed somewhat contrived in its solicitation of a two-page single-spaced draft that would then be expanded to four. We chose this approach partly because we wanted students to approach early reviews more as problem solvers than as error catchers. (Instructors across the disciplines can devise other strategies, yet we urge them strongly to emphasize the intellectual teamwork of problem solving in moving from first draft to revision.) Later in the course, once students had mastered our approach, demands in peer review sessions changed. Each student had been required to compose an individualized editing checklist during the semester based on response from the instructor and writing mentor, and they all were advised to use it on their own before submitting drafts for review. A sample checklist, taken from a student’s final e-portfolio, appears in Appendix A, and readers can see her representation of how she used this checklist during later stages of peer review by visiting her e-portfolio, linked to the online course syllabus. Not all of her editing suggestions were valid—illustrating another value of peer response mentioned by Herrington and Cadman (1991)—but most of them were. At the end of each assignment cycle, we devoted one homework assignment to out-of-class peer review that called on each student to apply his or her own individualized checklist to the penultimate drafts of two peers, and they managed this task quite effectively. They did not catch all the proofreading errors, but they did catch a good number of them. More importantly, they internalized proofreading practices to be carried over into other assignments and future courses.

If students have been equipped with a criterion-referenced rubric for writing assignments across the disciplines, for example, they can be instructed to refer to it in their metacommentary. Peer reviewers can then respond to stated intentions that already focus directly on the assignment and expectations for outcomes. Our major categories of “aim, authorship, and audience” can include a lot of subcategories, whether it be including “standard edited English” as an important part of “authorship” or teaching the specifics “aims” of a lab report in a given discipline and written for a narrowly-defined “audience.” As Bazerman and colleagues (2005) observe,

It isn’t that all good writing is the same, or even that a good writer can handle all kinds of writing; instead, writers use and must account for a set of essentials that are fairly stable even as they address the particulars of any writing situation. (p. 87)

The essentials of aim, authorship, and audience may well have been mastered by students who have completed introductory composition—or not. Regardless, the aims, audiences, and kinds of authorship expected in college courses vary dramatically from one discipline to another, and they require teaching this key component of the writing situation. Instructors who integrate peer review into their teaching practices can help students understand better the writing situation of the assignment and in the process will marshal a very valuable resource in helping students learn both form and content.

To that end, we also include a link to our own WAC program that includes a page reviewing rationales for peer review, samples of feedback forms that might be adapted to other situations, and alternative scenarios to the one we have presented for staging the teaching of review: http://www.mwp.hawaii.edu/resources/peer_review.htm. We also include Appendix B below, in which our scenario is presented in steps that can likewise be adapted. As noted, the setup is somewhat time-consuming and will require at least one full class session. But if this session has been carefully
planned and if peer review performances are documented and then used for further teaching and learning, the improved quality of writing and understanding of course concepts will make this time well spent. If the WAC movement has taught individual instructors anything, it is that writing in different disciplines can never be mastered by a student through the efforts of introductory composition alone. We are all writing instructors, no matter what our disciplines, and when we tap peer review to its fullest potential, we can help students become writing instructors, too. When they leave the academy for professional settings, they will encounter writing scenarios that are almost always highly collaborative and dependent upon many of the skills we teach through good peer review. Learning to conduct such review, whether as author or respondent, is a skill with lifelong value.

References


Purdue OWL. (n.d.). *Higher order concerns (HOCs) and lower order concerns (LOCs)*. Retrieved from http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/690/01/


Appendix A. Student Editing Checklist

**Composition I: Editing Checklist**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>✓</th>
<th>Potential Problem</th>
<th>How to Identify</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|    | Semicolon usage   | Must separate two independent sentences. | **Before correction:** It’s true that we have had problems in the past; settled our differences.  
**After correction:** It’s true that we have had problems in the past; we have since settled our differences. |
|    | The usage of “however” | **Beginning of a sentence:** Put a comma or any punctuation after the adverb.  
**Middle of a sentence:** Include a comma before AND after the adverb if the sentence is dependent. Include a semicolon before the adverb AND a comma after “however” if the sentence is independent. | **Beginning of a sentence:** However, half of the class did not study for the midterm.  
**Dependent sentence:** The rain, however, kept us indoors.  
**Two independent sentence:** There’s a new movie coming out; however, I do not have enough money to go.  
**WRONG:** There is however, no real way of telling who started the fight. |
|    | Colon usage       | Used to introduce a series, a list, an appositive, and a quotation | **Word:** There is one thing we all need to survive: food.  
**Phrase:** One factor cannot be ignored: the bottom line.  
**Clause:** There’s only one more question left unanswered: will time catch up with us in the end?  
**List:** On the first day of school the children were asked to bring: crayons, markers, colored pencils, notebooks, and a snack.  
**Quotation:** John F. Kennedy issued this stirring challenge: “Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.”  
**WRONG:** (1) She was in charge of: registration, cabin assignments, and camp clean up.  
(2) I play: football, soccer, and basketball.  
**Hint:** Do NOT use a colon after “such as”. |
|    | Comma usage       | 1. Use a comma to separate the elements in a series. | 1. He hit the ball, dropped the bat, and ran to first base. |
### Appendix A. Student Editing Checklist (cont.)

| 2. Use a comma + a conjunction to separate two independent clauses. |
| 3. Use comma to set off introductory elements. |
| 4. Use commas to set off parenthetical elements. |
| 5. Use commas to separate coordinate adjectives. |
| 6. Use commas to set off quoted elements. |
| 7. Use commas to set off phrases that express contrast. |
| 8. Use commas to avoid confusion. |
| 9. Never use only one comma between a subject and its verb. |

| 2. He didn’t hit the ball, but he ran toward first base. |
| 3. Running toward first base, he suddenly realized how stupid he looked. |
| 4. Timmy, who is John’s son, is not very good at baseball. |
| 5. He is a tall, distinguished, good-looking businessman. |
| 6. “The question is,” she said, “whether you’re ready to let go or not.” |
| 7. Some say the world will end in ice, not fire. |
| 8. For most, the year is finished. |

**Wrong:** For most the year is finished.

| 9. Believing completely and positively in oneself is essential for success. (There is no need for a comma after “oneself” even if the reader may pause naturally.) |

**I vs. me**

| “I” is a pronoun that must be the subject of a verb. |
| “Me” is a pronoun that must be the object of a verb. |

**Correct:** Georgia and I went to the beach today.  
**Hint:** Take out “Georgia and” and see if the sentence makes sense standing alone. (Me went to the beach today doesn’t make sense.)

**Correct:** Please come with Sarah and me to the park.  
**Hint:** Again, take out “Sarah and”. (Please come with I to the park doesn’t make sense.)

**Myself vs. me**

| Myself: “Myself” is a special object (direct or indirect), to be used only when the subject is you. |
| Me: The word “me” is always a direct or indirect object (never a subject). |

**Correct example:** The Captain handed the medals to my partner and me.

**Why it’s not “myself”:** I can give a gift to “myself” since I am the one doing the giving. The Captain can never “give a gift to myself” since the subject is the Captain.

| Hyphen usage |
| 1. Use a hyphen to join two or more words serving as a single adjective before a noun. |
| 2. Use a hyphen with compound numbers. |
| 3. Use a hyphen to avoid confusion or an awkward combination of letters. |
| 4. Use a hyphen with the prefixes ex- (meaning former), self-, all-; with the suffix - elect; between a prefix and a capitalized word; and with figures or letters. |
| 5. Use a hyphen to divide words at the end of a line if necessary, and make the break |

| 1. a one-way street, chocolate-covered peanuts, well-known author |
| 2. sixty-three, forty-six |
| 3. re-sign a petition (vs. resign from a job) |
| 4. ex-husband, self-assured, mid-September, all-included, mayor-elect, anti-American, t-shirt, pre-Civil War, mid-1980s |
| 5. pref-er-ence, sell-ing, in-di-vid-u-al-ist |
### Appendix A. Student Editing Checklist (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Apostrophe usage</th>
<th>The number dispute</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **6.** To form possessives of nouns. | **Words:**
| **7.** To show the omission of letters. | **over two pounds**
| **3.** To indicate certain plurals of lowercase letters. | **after thirty-one years**
| **DO NOT** use apostrophes for possessive pronouns or for noun plurals. | **eighty-three people**
| **1.** The boy’s hat= | **Correct:**
| **The hat that belongs to the boy** | **The group made its decision.**
| **2.** Don’t= | **Incorrect:**
| **Do not** | **his’ book**
| **3.** Nitta’s mother constantly stressed | **Correct:**
| **minding one’s p’s and q’s.** | **his book**
| **Incorrect:** | **The group made its decision.**
| his’ book | **Correct:**
| Correct: | his book
| Incorrect: The group made it’s decision. | Correct: The group made its decision.

| **6.** For line breaks, divide already hyphenated words only at the hyphen. |
| **7.** For line breaks in words ending in -ing, if a single final consonant in the root word is doubled before the suffix, hyphenate between the consonants; otherwise, hyphenate at the suffix itself. |

| **1.** For line breaks, divide already hyphenated words only at the hyphen. |
| **6.** [Sentence] mass-produced. |
| **7.** plan-ning, run-ning, driv-ing, call-ing |

| **2.** For line breaks, divide already hyphenated words only at the hyphen. |
| **6.** [Sentence] self-conscious. |

---

**Although usage varies, most people spell out numbers that can be expressed in one or two words and use figures for other numbers.**

- over two pounds
- after thirty-one years
- eighty-three people

**Figures:**
- after 126 days
- 2,384 bushels
- only $31.20
- 3.28 liters
Appendix B. Applying the 3 M’s—Metacommentary, Modeling, Multiple Technologies—to Support Peer Review of Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparatory Work (one hour out-of-class preparation; 30 minutes of in-class time)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Explain what meta-commentary is.</strong> If possible, talk about how it functions in your own thinking as you prepare a report, an article, or a book for others’ review.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>Show examples</strong> from previous students. If you have none, you can see samples from students whose e-portfolios are linked from the online syllabus for the course, available at this URL: <a href="http://www.english.hawaii.edu/henry/100/2009/home.html">http://www.english.hawaii.edu/henry/100/2009/home.html</a>, or use the excerpts from this report. You can also load examples to your online forum and require commentary from students to assure that they grasp the concept.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <strong>Emphasize that this meta-commentary is a key part of the assignment.</strong> Make sure that students understand the value of meta-commentary in conjunction with the written assignment and that it is <em>required</em>. You might show them an example of your own meta-commentary (which you will be completing in step 4), to give them an idea of how to elaborate on <em>aim, authorship, and audience</em> and to link these elaborations specifically to their writing assignment. Explain the strong connection between authorship and your evaluation rubric(s) so that students can key their commentary to it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <strong>Complete responses as the instructor and assistant</strong> (a Writing Center tutor can probably fill this function) on each other’s hard copy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <strong>Scan these responses to convert them to pdf files.</strong> You will use at least one of them very strategically in teaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. <strong>Stage the instructional session.</strong> Require students to bring their assignment with meta-commentary, printed out, to class for peer review.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B. Applying the 3 M’s—Metacommentary, Modeling, Multiple Technologies—to Support Peer Review of Writing (cont.)

In Class the Day of Review (one class session)

1. **Show your own responses.** Project the responses that you and your assistant have composed on a screen before students review for one another. Show them responses that you have written not only to the assignment but also to the metacommentary itself, thus demonstrating the "conversation" that gets started through the process. Spend some time reviewing these artifacts, pointing out the way in which margins were filled and arrows were drawn. Talk a bit about "running notes" that the reviewer makes while reading as well as the short end commentary that is intended to speak to the Jimbout the draft as a whole. Allot a good ten or fifteen minutes to this part of preparation, so that everyone has a good sense of the task ahead.

2. **Task students with reading one another's meta-commentary,** followed by the draft. Then instruct them to provide as many helpful suggestions as possible to help the author enhance her or his authorship, aim, and audience as these essentials have been adapted for your course and for this assignment. (In a 50-minute class, students will have time to respond to one other draft; in a 75-minute class, they can respond to two.) With any remaining time, discuss the process as a class so as to see how and why any students might have been stymied. Let them know that the follow-up exercise after class should help.
Appendix B. Applying the 3 M’s—Metacommentary, Modeling, Multiple Technologies—to Support Peer Review of Writing (cont.)

After Class

1. **Upload the instructor's and assistant's responses to one another** to the web forum so that students can study them at their own pace. We highly recommend doing this only after students have tried their own hands after seeing the examples on screen, so that students do not feel the need to mimic the responses in the mode of "providing the right answer." Require students to scan their handwritten responses and upload them to the web forum.

2. **Require students to reflect on their response** by comparing it with those of at least one other classmate and the assistant, and posting this reflection in your web forum or otherwise distributing it via e-mail. A hidden advantage of this step is that the assistant's response will most likely offer not only praise but critique to the instructor in the name of helping him or her revise, thus enabling the instructor to emphasize the power of getting a peer's review to improve.

3. **Require students to write a plan to revise.** In our case, revision entailed expanding the initial draft to four pages, based on peer response. In other scenarios, the expected terms of revision could vary dramatically. Whatever your rationale, respond to the student's plan (very briefly!) to confirm it or suggest modifying it, all the while sending the signal of the value of a peer's review.

4. **Require students to revise the draft**, with revised meta-commentary that references the reviews. In our case we required expanding the draft so that even very accomplished writers could benefit from the peer review and so that weaker writers could see how they could contribute to a stronger writer's revision.
Appendix B. Applying the 3 M’s—Metacommentary, Modeling, Multiple Technologies—to Support Peer Review of Writing (cont.)

5. **Conduct one more round of peer review, out of class**, using the Comment function in the word processor. Require students to upload all copies to the web forum for all to access. (Additional resources for conducting online peer review can be found at Michigan State's WIDE research center: http://wrac.msu.edu/portfolio/helping-users-use-eli/). For instructors (and students) who want to maintain the look of pen-and-paper response, in which margins are filled and arrows are drawn, an increasingly popular tool is “iAnnotate” (http://www.ajidev.com/iannotate/)

6. **Require students to revise one more time** for a (provisional) grade, once again revising their meta-commentary. We have put "provisional" into parentheses to indicate our own approach to evaluation. In this class all students were compiling e-portfolios, and it was a part of grading procedures that they could return to any graded piece of writing and keep working on it, possibly improving their grade. In other contexts, instructors might prefer simply to stop at this step or to add a final round of peer editing, conducted out of class using the Comment function and making use of students' self-editing checklists.