Grading and Responding to Students' Work: Less is More
December 12, 2014

For most of us, grading and commenting on students' papers can be very time-consuming. Yet research shows that a lot of our painstaking comments are counterproductive! Come find out how fewer, briefer comments on papers can help students learn better. Actual student papers will be provided as a jumping-off point for this discussion on grading and commenting strategies.

Publications:

Caron, Thomas. “Teaching Writing as a Con-artist: When is a Writing Problem Not?” College Teaching vol. 56, no. 3 (summer 2008): 137-139.


Straub, Richard [author of A Sourcebook for Responding to Student Writing]. Students’ Reaction to Teachers’ Comments. Prezi, 2014.


Washington University, St. Louis, The Teaching Center. “Tips for Commenting on Student Writing.”

Links:
For Students: online writing help https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/
Association of American Colleges and Universities, “Written Communication VALUE Rubric.”
Carnegie Mellon University, “Research Project Writing Rubric.”
Colomb, Gregory. “Some Characteristics of Novice Writers.”
Muhlenburg College Library, Alternatives to the Research Paper.
UNLV Online Writing Lab (OWL)
Online writing help for students: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/

Template for a helpful comment on students’ work:
1. positive or true statement to establish credibility, make student receptive
   a. specific example that offers evidence of the above statement
   b. comparison to the student’s previous assignment
2. strategies for improvement (1 or 2, prioritized, that student can apply to the next assignment)
   a. specific examples (citing sections/pages/URLs of the students’ work)
   b. questions to push the students’ thinking further
3. [optional: identify a pattern of mistake that the student can control for; cite an authoritative reference for consultation by the student]