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Even before getting into specifics, the WID experience was useful for giving a chance to speak about assignments. I've taught different classes for twenty years, and I'm accustomed to working by myself to develop all the elements on my own, from the syllabus through writing assignments to the finals. So, I learned from the questions posed to each of these elements and from the task of putting into words for others the procedures that I had developed from my own perspective.

In that regard, both Tenn Joe and Bryan were great at facilitating that conversation. They had objective questions taken from the discipline, and their questions also came from their own experience. Both were experienced at articulating the principles of writing and of teaching. Both these approaches were helpful in thinking more objectively about my own writing assignments and my classes, in general. The collegial atmosphere they created and fostered really fit the content they provided.

Among other things, they brought out the virtue of explaining an assignment's nuts-and-bolts up front before providing background information. They also highlighted the way subheads can improve the clarity of an assignment with a long explanation. Looking at a specific assignment of mine—and applying these points to it—was even more useful than simply describing the use of headings and organization in the abstract. I will also use the suggestion to require students' write and submit interim stages of a formal paper. All of this will be applied to any future syllabus, including a suggestion to be specific and clear about writing assignments and their due dates, for both interim and final papers.

Relatedly, the other teachers in the class also helped to broaden my perspective. It was interesting that both were from different fields than mine, so they added breadth to my thinking about assignments. For example, I had previously never thought in terms of using graphic images to develop critical thinking. The fact that both were concerned and considerate teachers, who were also articulate about their work was critically important.

The textbook was also useful in my developing a more objective and informed viewpoint about my classes. Here is a specific example: the text explained rubrics and the way each rubric related to the particular class to which it was applied. Part of what was useful was identifying the fact that the text's description of the holistic method fit my own particular class subject and content better than the analytic method, which seems more well-suited to a course more focused on quantitative data. Having a greater sense of this holistic method now allows me to improve my own approach to papers and to the assignments that create them.

As a whole, the seminar also gave me an increased sense of how different student-audiences benefit from different approaches to the way assignments are constructed, conveyed, and then graded. The chapter on bringing more critical thinking into lectures built out my way of asking questions of a class.

I also thought it was a good idea to end with a look at classroom discussions, a natural extension of the focus on writing assignments. Both seem equally important ways to promote active learning and, in the words of the text, "make students more engaged and inquisitive learners, more powerful thinkers, and better arguers." I appreciated the link the text presented between writing assignments and critical thinking in the classroom, and I'll think about strengthening that link in preparing individual classes in future courses.