Because we actually want to know if students are learning what we think we are teaching them.

Why do we do this?
General Education Writing Outcome 4D, Reflective Learning:

“Students **produce** a reflective piece that **introduces** their final portfolio or project, **reflects** on their learning, and **identifies** the choices and changes they made in preparing the portfolio or final project.”
Data Collection

- Students submitted an extra copy of their reflective intros in all Gen Ed WRT courses in Spring 2008: WRT 104, 105, 106, 227, 235, 303, 305, 333
- Instructor and student names were removed
- 58/71 sections participated (82%), with 1195 reflections collected
Data Analysis

Rubric with a 0-5 point scale, addressing each element of the outcome together (holistic, not primary trait scoring)

552/1195 essays (46%) randomly selected for analysis; stratified sample ensured proportional representation

Two-hour norming session, leading to fewer than 5% needing to be read by a 3rd rater (high inter-rater reliability)

Outcome 1d: Students produce a reflective piece that introduces their final portfolio or final project, reflects on their learning, and identifies the choices and changes they made in preparing the portfolio or final project.

5 = Exceeds expectations.
Produces a reflective piece: Well-written, with a sharp focus or central idea as appropriate for the genre they have chosen, and for their audience. Paragraphs or sections are well developed with a variety of support, with transitions appropriate to the genre. Contains very few, if any, errors.
Introduces the entries: Refers specifically to all included entries with title and description; references are integrated smoothly into the text.
Reflects on learning: Insights are fresh, sophisticated, or memorable. Metaphors, analogies, or other literary devices are effective and compelling. Depth is satisfying, with rich support for claims including evidence from various sources.
Identifies choices and changes: Detailed and motivated explanations of why entries were chosen and how they were revised. Uses terms from course materials (i.e., genre, audience, rhetorical situation, ethos, etc.) expertly. Clearly demonstrates an awareness of craft.

4 = Somewhat exceeds expectations.
Produces a reflective piece: Well-written, with a sharp focus or central idea as appropriate for the genre and audience. Most sections are well developed with a variety of support, with transitions appropriate to the genre. Contains a few errors, none of which interfere with meaning.
Introduces the entries: Refers specifically to all included entries with title and description; for the most part, references are integrated smoothly into the text.
Reflects on learning: Insights may be fresh or memorable. May use analogy, metaphor, or other literary devices. Support for claims includes evidence from various sources and sufficient depth.
Identifies choices and changes: Motivated explanations of why entries were chosen and how they were revised. Uses terms from course materials (i.e., genre, audience, rhetorical situation, ethos, etc.) well. Demonstrates a growing facility with craft.

3 = Meets expectations.
Produces a reflective piece: Has a central idea appropriate to genre and audience, possibly with a straightforward introduction. Sections are generally well-developed with occasional lapses. Support may be inconsistent or lacking in variety. Will contain some errors, but very few that interfere with understanding.
Introduces the entries: Refers to the entries, possibly without titles, description, or contextual information. May lack appropriate specificity for the audience.
Reflects on learning: Includes insights about learning that may be interesting to the student, but perhaps not fresh or surprising to the audience. Most of the claims are supported with examples from the writing and/or course materials.
Identifies choices and changes: Addresses which entries were chosen or how they were revised with some specificity. Uses terms from the course competently for the most part. Demonstrates a developing sense of craft.
Intellectual Community Involvement

- Tenure-track faculty
- Lecturers
- Part-time Faculty
- Graduate students and TAs
So, how were we doing in 2008?

16% (91/552) mixed results – 1 rater meets expectations, 1 rater below expectations

55% (305/552) unanimously meet or exceed expectations

28% (156/552) unanimously failed to meet expectations
Goals to Meet by 2011

2008: 31% (170/552) at 2.0 or 2.5
55% unanimously at 3s and higher

Goal for 2011: move a substantial percentage of 2.5’s to 3s and higher
63% unanimously at 3s and higher
To reach this goal, we must involve the entire WRT teaching staff.

By involving them in the process — by sharing the data and the meaning-making — we invite all of our staff to be a part of the solution.
Action: 2008-2009

2.5 Working Group

- Examine all 2.5’s
- Characterize trends
- Design hands-on in-class modules
- Recommend other curricular changes for faculty approval
- Focus on direct instruction

Reflective Introduction

Writing 104 drastically increased my confidence in my writing. As I wrote about in my literacy narrative, I never truly opened up enough to improve my writing until late in my senior year of high school. This class allowed me to pick up where I left off in high school and prove to myself that I am a good writer. I learned the proper techniques to writing a literacy narrative, a profile, analyzing a text, arguing a position, and informing on a topic. I am no longer clueless how to start each paper and I do not make those little common mistakes anymore.

I chose three entries for my portfolio. I chose the three that I found myself most interested in while writing. I re-read each of my five papers from this semester and decided which three I enjoyed writing most and also which I thought could use some improvement. I decided to choose my literacy narrative, arguing a position, and profile.

I chose my literacy narrative, “My First Real Essay”, because this class truly made me realize how grateful I am for that lesson in high school. I believe that the lesson which took place in this paper is what allowed me to succeed in this class. It is because I am so grateful for this experience that I did not mind revising my paper about it. My first step of revising this paper was to correct the small errors such as spelling and punctuation. I then reworded my verbs to make sure they were all in the same tense. I also moved some sentences and ideas to different places in the paper to make it more organized. The last improvement I made was adding some detail and explanation to certain sentences which were unclear. Prior to this assignment I did not know what a literacy narrative was. I now feel positive that I can successfully write one again on another topic.

The second piece I chose for my portfolio was an arguing a position paper. The title of this paper was “Is Murder not Illegal?” I wrote this paper about a needed effort to make the sale of tobacco products illegal. I chose this piece for my portfolio because I feel very strongly about the topic. I was determined to find good reasons to prove this movement needs to be done. I started improving this paper by relocating certain sentences and paragraphs to places they seemed to fit. I also ridded of some as well. I made changes to the way I used quotes and the way I cited them. This was one of the two assignments that improved my knowledge on how to cite sources.
Action: 2009-2010

- Paid workshop on embedding reflection and reflective writing

- All-Department meetings focus on
  - Idea development
  - Coherence
  - Reflection

- Hiring packets emphasize student learning outcomes

- Standard syllabi revised to include activities aimed at idea development, coherence, and reflection
Action: 2010 - 2011

All-department meetings focus again on idea development, coherence, and reflection
2011 Reassessment

• Same data collection
• Same sampling
• Same rubric
• Same norming
• Same rating process

• So, did our professional development and curricular changes make a difference?
Well, not so much

We dropped from 55% meeting expectations to only 40% meeting expectations
WHY ???

More than 60% turnover in teaching staff:

- Loss of tenure-track faculty
- Loss of lecturer lines
- Loss of TA lines in Writing
- Increased reliance on part-time faculty

- 85 2008 sections
- 36 2011 sections taught by returning 2008 staff
- 25 2011 sections taught by 2008 participants in PD workshops and all-dept meetings
- 13 2011 sections taught by full-time faculty
- 12 2011 sections taught by part-time faculty who attend all-department meetings and PD events
% of Fulltime* and Part-time**

** COM **
- 78% Fulltime (FT)
- 22% Part-time (PT)

** MTH **
- 55% Fulltime (FT)
- 45% Part-time (PT)

** ENG **
- 55% Fulltime (FT)
- 45% Part-time (PT)

** WRT **
- 82% Fulltime (FT)
- 18% Part-time (PT)

* Tenure-track and lecturers
** Per course and graduate students
So, will **Assessment** link meaningfully to **Institutional Effectiveness** and **Strategic Budgeting**?

For the sake of our students …

… I hope so