Abstract: In this teaching-improvement project I develop and measure the effectiveness of a feedback process on student writing with the purpose to not only help students improve their work and writing skills, but also help students see themselves as becoming capable writers in their careers. I give my students two significant authentic writing assignments. In the first, students respond to a fictional, but realistic, request for grant proposals. I authored the request for proposal (RFP) documents and tailored them for my class, but they are based on actual RFPs for business research. In the second assignment, students work with a real data set and an actual local business client and produce a professional business report. For both writing assignments, I put students through a feedback process that includes peer (fellow student) review, instructor feedback letters, and face-to-face instructor mentoring. At the end of the term, I use a survey to measure student mindset, sense of belonging, and confidence to tackle future writing. I administer the survey to all sophomores and juniors college of business administration to make comparisons to students in my own sections versus other sections, to compare my students to those who have not yet completed the course, and take into account students who have completed other courses on professional writing and communication.

Formative Feedback

Important, but not really the goal: Students produce quality written work for their assignments

The real goal: Give students the critical thinking skills, mindset, and confidence to produce quality written work throughout their careers.

Feedback Mechanism:
1. Assignment descriptions with rubrics, fictional criteria for evaluating research proposals, client class presentations
2. Formative peer feedback: Focusing on one strength & one weakness each from rubric and evaluation criteria. Emphasis on revision suggestions.
3. Formative instructor letters: Request revision, identify strengths and weaknesses, generated with Breevy
4. Instructor meetings: Students bring revision plans
5. Summative feedback: Overall grade, rubric scores

Survey: Administer in May 2018, May 2019

Outcome variables:
- Mindset: Level of agreement on how much people can change their intelligence, writing ability, math ability
- Belonging: Sense of respect and support of peers and instructors
- Writing confidence: Level of agreement on being capable of producing quality writing in future assignments in business, science, humanities, in academia and in career.

Explanatory variables:
- Having taken ECO 230 with me
- Having taken ECO 230 with anyone (we all have similar goals and strategies)
- Other course experience in writing and communication
- Experience with formative feedback in other courses
- Demographics

Research questions:
- Does the experience in my class lead to healthier mindset and greater writing confidence?
- Does more formative feedback, more experience in communication courses, improve mindset and writing confidence?