CHRISTOPHER HORGER

American University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

OUT WITH THE OLD, IN WITH THE NEW: ON-LINE WRITING ASSESSMENT OF FIRST-YEAR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AT THE AMERICA

Abstract:

Old school writing assessment involved long hours of hand writing comments on student essays. These written comments were designed as feedback to guide students to improve their writing. However, since many instructors wrote in cursive, there were frequently issues of legibility, and sometimes students couldn't understand the written feedback. Plus, instructors found that much of what they wrote was repetitive, making the act of assessment boring drudgery.

With the advent of on-line assessment, all written feedback appears as print text, and students are more likely to read and understand their teacher's comments. Furthermore, teachers have the added advantage of using rubrics, which clearly state the criteria used for assessment. What's more, teachers can use desktop notes to record the most commonly written comments, and instead of re-typing and reiterating them endlessly as feedback on student essays, they can make use of copy and paste functions to improve efficiency and reduce grading time.

This presentation will discuss many of the advantages of migrating to Blackboard for improved efficiency in writing assessment.