

## “Teaching Writing” Session, AKD Workshop on Teaching and Learning March 2017

Professors say they want students to write, and write well, but most of us in the social science disciplines have not been trained in how to teach writing. This can make it a challenge for us to guide students to become better writers. One of the downsides of being an expert at something is that the behaviors become so ingrained in us that we may have a hard time explain to others how to do what we do. This creates a challenge for training our students to do what we do.

Some of the many perspectives on “writing”

- Learning to write
- Writing to learn
- Summative/formative
- Formal/informal
- Development/mastery
- Graded/ungraded
- Feedback level/revision expectations

Why should we have our students write?

- Competent communication skills are hallmarks of an educated person
- Increased engagement with course and materials
- Enhances learning and retention of knowledge
- Writing doesn’t have to be “big” to be useful

How to help students increase the quality of their written products

- Assigned numbers of words/pages
- Start with a prompt
- Reading then writing
- Feedback and peer review
- Discrete assignments v portfolios/collections
- Practice, practice, practice

What an assignment/course looks like (some samples)

- Social psych assignments
- SOCI 3700 syllabus

**Super Resources for Writing:** [wac.colstate.edu](http://wac.colstate.edu)

Bean, John, C. 2011. *Engaging Ideas: The Professor’s Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.