# Peer Review & Feedback Forms

Many of us find professional peer review very useful: it suggests different perspectives and provides valuable feedback on what is compelling and what is problematic in a manuscript. It should come as no surprise then, that students also find peer review valuable. The benefits of peer review sessions include the following:

- ✓ Students must begin the writing process early, and get feedback before they turn in their paper to the instructor.
- ✓ Students recognize the strengths and weaknesses of their own writing after reading and responding to another paper.
- ✓ Students develop a greater sense of and sensitivity to audience.
- ✓ Students learn new information from their peers' papers.

Good peer review does not happen automatically, however. You can help your students become good peer reviewers by teaching them what to look for, and creating peer review opportunities in your classrooms. A particularly effective way to guide them is by developing and using feedback forms.

Developing Feedback Forms
Guide your students' feedback by providing them with a list of characteristics that are key to their success on the assignment. Make explicit your evaluation criteria.

Convert your list of characteristics into a peer feedback form. Your goal is to help students recognize and construct assertion-plus-evidence arguments. You can develop a list of open-ended questions--like the ones in the sample below.

You can easily modify the form to fit different assignment guidelines or to emphasize additional aspects of the assignment.

**Sample 1: OPEN-ENDED FORM** (leave space for review comments)

Author _____
Reviewer _____

The goals of peer review are 1) to help improve your classmate's paper by pointing out strengths and weaknesses that may not be apparent to the author and, 2) to help improve editing skills.

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the paper assignment to yourself twice, once to get an overview of the paper, and a second time to provide constructive criticism for the author to use when revising his/ her paper. Answer the questions below.

### ORGANIZATION
1. Are the basic sections (intro, thesis, conclusion, etc.) adequate? If not, what is missing?
2. Is the thesis in the first paragraph? Does it make an argument?
3. Does each paragraph address one issue, and relate back to the main thesis? Explain.
4. Was the material ordered in a way that was logical, clear, and easy to follow? Explain.

### CITATIONS
1. Does the writer cite sources adequately and appropriately? Note any incorrect formatting.
2. Are there enough references to other sources?

### GRAMMAR AND STYLE
1. Are there any grammatical or spelling problems?
2. Is the writer's writing style clear?

You can also develop a criteria grid (Sample 2), modifying the criteria so they fit the expectations of the assignment.

**Sample 2: CRITERIA GRID**

| Weak | Satisfactory | Strong | CRITERIA | READER'S COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Thesis: clear, comprehensive, answers assignment question | |
| | | | Evidence/ Support for Thesis: relevance, strength, credibility | |
| | | | Organization: arrangement of ideas, coherence, inclusion of intro and conclusion | |
| | | | Mechanics: spelling, grammar, punctuation | |
| | | | Overall effectiveness | |