Towards a More Cogent Curriculum for Experimental Writing: A Case Study
TOWARDS A MORE COGENT CURRICULUM FOR EXPERIMENTAL WRITING

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- AMU 3585 (Writing Experiments) had been taught for a decade

- Outdated Unit Guide
  - 2 formative assessments
  - 1 summative assessment

- Barely indicating learning processes in weekly lesson plans
Upon taking over the unit,
- Cut down the requirements for formative assessments
- Tweaked the rubrics
  - Lighter
  - More manageable
- Added multiple-choice questions (MCQ) quizzes
- Revised lesson plans to reflect rubrics

Modifications stood on untested grounds
Consulted the learning skills adviser
- Teasing out the facets of curriculum using the RSD framework
### ASSESSING STUDENT CREATIVE SKILLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mini Assignment 1 – Soundscapes (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moodle Quiz 1: Poetic Devices &amp; Close Reading (5%)</td>
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<td>Moodle Quiz 3: Essay Structure and Theme (5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 1: Preliminary Research (15%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moodle Quiz 4: Experimental Draft (5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 2: Experimental Draft (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moodle Quiz 5: Strategies Revision (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 3: Major Composition and Exegesis (40%)</td>
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## Research Skill Development Framework

**Students' Autonomy when Researching**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prescribed Researching</th>
<th>Bounded Researching</th>
<th>Scaffolded Researching</th>
<th>Open-ended Researching</th>
<th>Unbounded Researching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly structured directions and modelling from educator prompt research, in which...</td>
<td>Boundaries set by and limited directions from educator channel research, in which...</td>
<td>Scalloped placed by educator shape independent research, in which...</td>
<td>Students initiate research and this is guided by the educator...</td>
<td>Students determined guidelines for researching that are in accord with discipline or context...</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Embark & Clarify**
*What is our purpose?*  Students respond to questions and tasks arising explicitly from a closed issue. **Use a prescribed methodological approach to clarify questions, terms, requirements, expectations & ECTG issues.**

**Find & Generate**
*What do we need?*  Students collect and generate needed information/data using appropriate methodology.

**Evaluate & Reflect**
*What do we trust?*  Students evaluate sources/searches information/data using appropriate criteria to specify credibility & to reflect on the research process.

**Organize & Manage**
*How do we arrange?*  Students organize information/data to reveal patterns/themes & make overall research processes visible.

**Analyze & Synthesize**
*What & how do we analyze?*  Students analyze information/data to produce coherent understandings.

**Communicate & Apply**
*How will we relate?*  Students discuss, listen, write, respond to feedback/perform the process, understandings & apply to research, leading ECTG issues and outcomes of research.

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**Students determine the credibility of sources, information, data & make overall research processes visible.**

**Students determine the credibility of sources, information, data & make overall research processes visible.**

**Students evaluate searches/sources of information/data using simple prescribed criteria to specify credibility & to reflect on the research process.**

**Students develop a process that reflects on multiple pathways (eg. specific team goals).**

**Students organize information/data using a chosen structure. Manage self-organized processes including teams (eg. multiple pathways).**

**Students organize information/data using self-determined structured & managed processes (including teams) within the parameters set.**

**Students use prescribed genres to develop & demonstrate understanding & applications of the research.**

**Students use some discipline-specific language & genres to demonstrate understanding by specifying knowledge & evidence.**

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**Research Skill Development Framework**

For educators to facilitate the explicit, coherent, incremental and cyclical development of the skills associated with researching, problem-solving, critical thinking and clinical reasoning.

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METHODOLOGY

- Identified that skills of experimental writing were not explicit

- Creative skills derived from Writing Experiments Learning Outcomes.

- Using Nvivo, mapped the 3 major assignments and 7 mini-assignments to the RSD facets and creative skills
Table 1: List of Creative Skills

1. Explore alternate, divergent, or contradictory creative strategies
2. Determine the right creative strategies to use
3. Generate the creative strategies
4. Articulate reasons for choosing alternate, divergent, or contradictory creative strategies
5. Distinguish similar or contradictory creative strategies
6. Evaluate and reflect on the creative strategies
7. Integrate alternate, divergent, or contradictory creative strategies
8. Connect the creative strategies in new ways
9. Extend the creative strategies to create new knowledge
10. Re-formulate the creative strategies towards novelty
11. Transform the creative strategies into entirely new forms
12. Reproduce the creative strategies in different forms
13. Synthesise the creative strategies in a coherent whole
Figure 1: Facet Distribution Percentage in the Unit Guide

- Embark and Clarify: 20%
- Find and Generate: 8%
- Evaluate and Reflect: 8%
- Organise and Manage: 21%
- Analyze and Synthesize: 21%
- Communicate and Apply: 22%
Figure 2: Creative Skill Distribution Percentage in the Unit Guide
Figure 3: Levels of Student Autonomy in the Unit Guide

- Prescribed: 0%
- Bounded: 21%
- Scaffolded: 34%
- Open-ended: 0%
- Unbounded: 45%
DISCUSSION

- Mapping shows that the unit emphasizes on more academic and cognitive skills
- Hamper experimentation
- The unit downplays a key ingredient of experimental writing: PLAYFULNESS
To address the findings, changes were made to the unit guide
- Reduction of assessment tasks
- Remodeling the remaining assessment tasks
- Re-wording/phrasing some of the rubric description to reflect the creative skills
## ASSESSMENT

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<th>Original</th>
<th>Re-worked</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mini Assignment 1 – Soundscapes (5%)</td>
<td>Mini Assignment – Podcast (10%)</td>
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<td>Moodle Quiz 1: Poetic Devices &amp; Close Reading (5%)</td>
<td>Assignment 1: Preliminary Research (25%)</td>
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<td>Moodle Quiz 2: Using the Experimental Exercise Rubric (5%)</td>
<td>Assignment 2: Experimental Draft (15%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mini Assignment 2 – Writing a Surrealistic Text (5%)</td>
<td>Assignment 3: Major Composition and Exegesis (50%)</td>
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<td>Re-worded</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>The proposed theme is strongly developed with evidence of original thought.</td>
<td>The proposed theme is strongly generated and articulated with evidence of original thought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The broad range of strategies is strongly understood and applied.</td>
<td>The broad range of strategies is well-connected and synthesised.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The complementarity of the proposed theme and the broad range of strategies is excellent.</td>
<td>The proposed theme complements and integrates excellently with the broad range of strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The experimental writing as a whole is strongly expressed and developed.</td>
<td>All the writing fragments integrate as a seamless whole, with evidence of experimentation, and thoughtful exploration.</td>
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</tbody>
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Figure 4:  
A New Model for Teaching and Learning for Experimental Writing
REFERENCES


THANK YOU