

## Benefits of and Guidelines for Peer Revision

### Overview

Peer revision, if used constructively and seriously, can really make a difference not only in the quality of the papers your students will submit but also in your students' attitudes about those papers. The benefits for students and instructors are numerous:

For students, peer revision workshops can

- provide an opportunity to receive feedback on a paper they are working on for your class;
- increase their abilities to critique not only another person's writing but their own;
- eliminate some of the stress that comes with writing a paper.

For faculty, peer revision workshops can

- alleviate the time-consuming task of conferencing with each and every student to discuss her or his paper;
- make the job of reading student final papers an easier one, knowing you are not the first person who has looked at the papers.

### Guidelines

To increase the success rate of peer revision workshops, you should:

- Make the workshops mandatory. If a student does not come prepared with a complete draft on workshop day (or doesn't show up on workshop day), determine a penalty of your choice.
- Be willing to give up most of one class period. It will be worth it when collect their final drafts.
- Provide clear and specific instructions for the peer review session. This is done most easily by providing them with a "Peer Review Workshop Sheet" (see samples)
- Don't make peer groups larger than three. You might begin with having students work with just one partner, and then if time allows, have them meet again with a new classmate.
- Circulate the room during the workshop, offering comments and assistance as you listen to students' discussions. This also keeps them focused on the assignment and eliminates talk among students not related to the assignment.
- Bring the class together at the end of the session, asking for comments or questions about the process and the papers.