

Writing about Learning and Teaching in Higher Education

Creating and Contributing to Scholarly Conversations
across a Range of Genres

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“What makes a good critical friend?” (Reflection 26.1) was originally [published as a blog post](#) and is reproduced by permission of the author, Rebecca J. Hogue.

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PART 5

WRITING EFFICIENTLY, EFFECTIVELY, AND ENERGIZINGLY

The When, Where, and How of Writing

Introduction to Part 5

The overarching theme of this part of the book is how you might write about learning and teaching in efficient, effective, and energizing ways that strike a balance between, on the one hand, working within established structures and expectations for writing and, on the other, pushing beyond those structures and expectations. Through the stages of beginning, developing, and refining a text, you need to create an approach that is efficient, effective, and energizing *for you*. As we have maintained throughout this book, that approach will depend on what conversations about learning and teaching you hope to contribute to and create, who you are and want to become as a learning and teaching scholar, what values you embrace as a writer, and how you use writing to learn.

The set of chapters in this part of the book pose questions and offer recommendations for how to develop such an approach. It includes a discussion of allotting time and choosing space to write ([chapter 23](#)); writing and rewriting your draft ([chapter 24](#)); becoming an engaging writer ([chapter 25](#)); and seeking networks, critical friends, and feedback as a social and developmental process ([chapter 26](#)). These steps toward writing in ways that are efficient, effective, and energizing might not unfold in such a linear sequence; indeed, they are far more recursive and interactive than this list suggests. Although this section might be seen as the most practical of the guidelines

we offer, we urge you to keep in mind how these more technical considerations are informed and guided by the threads we name in [part 2](#) and weave throughout this book: contributing to and creating conversations with fellow learning and teaching scholars, shaping and building your identity and values as a learning and teaching scholar, and using writing to learn.

As you read the chapters in [part 5](#), you might want to reconsider the questions we posed in the introduction to [part 2](#), reframed here in terms of what is efficient, effective, and energizing for you. By “efficient” we mean that you have considered and made an informed judgment about how best to use your time. By “effective” we mean that the choices you have made allow you to succeed in meeting your goals. By “energizing” we mean that the choices you have made allow you to experience, generate, and benefit from, not just “use,” energy.

- Is your approach efficient and effective in preparing you to engage in conversation with particular learning and teaching communities?
- Does your approach capture your commitments as a writer and convey them to others in a way that is efficient, effective, and energizing for you?
- Does your approach allow you to address in an efficient, effective, and energizing way what matters to you about writing?
- In what ways does your approach allow you to engage in writing to learn in a way that is efficient, effective, and energizing?
- Is your overall approach “active and energizing” (Sword 2017a, 206)?

After you address these questions, you might want to return to your responses to the parallel questions in [part 2](#) and look for interesting echoes or new sounds in and of your voice.