
Evaluation Report

English 9A

University of Missouri High School

Produced by DMS Collaborative
(David Cripe, Marc Lundstrom, Stephen Solen)

May 2017



English 9A

University of Missouri High School



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Executive Summary

This document is the evaluation report on the English 9A online course created and hosted by the University of Missouri High School. The High School requested an external evaluation of this course to help determine the effectiveness of the methods currently used to provide feedback to students as they progress through the course. The High School was especially curious to know the effectiveness of the pre-written feedback automatically delivered by the technology at appropriate times in the course. The focus of the evaluation was formative in nature, and focused on the feedback model employed in the course.

The methods utilized in this study were varied and included direct observation of course users by the evaluation team, interviews with instructors and teaching assistants, and reviews conducted by the evaluation team. Because students and instructors in the course are spread over different states, the evaluation activities were primarily completed using online resources and technologies. The results of the evaluation suggest that the feedback methods currently employed in the course are helpful to course users. Additionally, the results suggest that while most aspects of the feedback model meet industry-standard best practices for online courses, one significant aspect in which it fails to meet those standards is in providing a clearly stated plan for responding to students and providing feedback on assignments.

Introduction

The English 9A online course is a self-paced, independent study course that fills the English 9 standards set by the State of Missouri. The course was developed by the University of Missouri High School. Dr. Krista Galyen, Director of Research, Development and Evaluation for the High School sought data on the effectiveness of the model utilized for delivering course feedback to the students. Specifically, Dr. Galyen was interested in ideas about how to increase feedback to the students without increasing the budgeted teacher time and financial resources allotted to the course.

The evaluation was conducted over a period of approximately 4 months during the Spring Semester of 2017 by University of Missouri graduate students David Cripe, Marc Lundstrom, and Stephen Solen. Marc is an instructional design professional currently earning his PhD, while David and Stephen are experienced online education professionals earning Education Specialist and Master's degrees respectively. Through questions posed through interviews with instructors and teaching assistants, direct observation of course users, and a review of the course against industry-standard online course quality standards, the evaluators intend to provide recommendations regarding feedback delivered to students without increasing the teacher workload or incurring additional costs to the University of Missouri High School.

Background

The University of Missouri High School created the original version of the self-paced online English 9A course in the year 2000 to provide English 9 credits for those seeking an alternative path to earning English credit through courses taught by traditional high schools. Since its original debut, multiple students have completed the course successfully; however, the High School did not feel the class was designed to fully support the best student learning possible.

Online courses are convenient programs that allow students to work on courses at their own pace, while at the same time providing the same course materials to meet State and Federal standards toward graduation. The enrollment for online courses has been on the rise since 2003 (Sheehy, 2013), providing students all over the world alternate, accredited courses. One challenge that plagues online courses is productive and personalized feedback to students within a reasonable amount of time.

In 2016, the English 9A course at the University of Missouri High School was redesigned with the intent to promote student success through additional feedback opportunities. It was also designed to align with the University of Missouri High School philosophy on how high school students should be taught, namely, that the student should be supported along the way, giving ample feedback and opportunities to resubmit work based on the feedback provided. In many courses at the High School, feedback is provided to students through the grading activities of teaching assistants (TAs), who are paid on a per-piece basis, meaning that each TA is paid per assignment he or she grades. This way of providing that all-important instructor feedback, however, is expensive, and budget constraints required the University of Missouri High School to consider alternative (non-human), automatic feedback possibilities to students to continue enhancing their learning throughout the course, which is the model that has been implemented in the redesigned English 9A course, and which the evaluation team looked at closely.

In its redesigned state, English 9A is a live, final product on a production server and was actively used by students during the time the evaluation is being conducted. Typically, enrolled students will have six months to complete the course from start to finish on his/her own pace.

The main objectives of English 9A are below (from the syllabus):

- be able to read, interpret, and analyze a variety of texts
- be able to recognize, understand, and interpret meaning of literary devices such as figurative language, story and poem structure, author's purpose, and structures of different types of writing
- be able to respond to literature in writing that is well organized with an introduction, body with supporting details, and conclusion

Challenges the evaluation team experienced and attempted to overcome in conducting this evaluation included the following:

1. Only three students were actively enrolled in the course, decreasing the opportunities available to the evaluators to glean feedback from active students. This situation proved far more difficult to overcome than originally anticipated and resulted in the need for significant changes in the data collection methods utilized by the evaluation team.
2. Reticence on the part of actively enrolled students to engage in any extra-curricular course evaluation activities initiated by the evaluation team. Causes for this are unknown because no reasoning was offered.
3. Student, instructor, and evaluator physical locations did not always align well; in some cases they are located in different time zones.
4. The students enrolled in the course are minors. This resulted in the need to be extra cautious in planning for contact with them and resulted in the need for additional planning and coordination, including modification of the data collection methods.

Stakeholders

The client for this formative evaluation is the University of Missouri High School. They recently completed a redesign of their English 9A course and wanted to see if the feedback model employed in the course is adequate and what improvements could be made to assist students more directly. The primary audience was Dr. Krista Galyen and the secondary audience was the instructors of the English 9A course. The relevant stakeholders are the University of Missouri High School, Dr. Krista Galyen, English 9A instructors, and the students in the course.

Participants

In reviewing the results of this formative evaluation, readers should bear in mind that the population of participants available to the evaluation team to contact for data about the feedback in this brand new course was extremely small. There were only three students enrolled in this course during the time the study was conducted. In addition to these three, the only others who were actively involved in the course were an instructor and two teaching assistants. Because of the small number of individuals using the course (6 total), and the complete unavailability of the students, despite numerous efforts by the evaluators and Mizzou K12 to involve them, the evaluation team had to rely on recruitment of other users whose motivations for being in the course and level of experience in the content area likely differed greatly from the actual, authentic, intended audience for the course. Details about these other users and their involvement in the data collection is included below in the discussion of each data collection method.

Decisions

The results of this evaluation will likely influence multiple decisions regarding English 9A. Among these are the following anticipated decisions:

1. Decisions about whether the technology-mediated feedback mechanisms in the course need revision.
2. Decisions about whether additional feedback opportunities should be implemented in the course.
3. Decisions about other feedback formats that would be appropriate for the course.

Each of these decisions relates to the feedback model employed in this course, which was the focus of the evaluation.

Evaluation Questions

The following questions were addressed in this evaluation in order to both inform the decisions mentioned above and accomplish the purposes of the evaluation.

1. What recommendations can be made to enhance feedback to students?
2. Does feedback to students meet industry-standard best practices for online courses?
3. What recommendations can be made to enhance opportunities for students to rework and resubmit their work following feedback?
4. What recommendations can be made to strengthen students' feelings of support from the instructor as they work through the course?

Towards the end of the following section, the results of the evaluation relative to these questions will be discussed.

Results

User Observations

We observed three different users as they worked through the second module of the English 9A course. The three students enrolled in the course, for whom the observation protocol was designed, declined to participate in the observations, so the evaluators utilized three users who were part of the Mizzou K-12 Collaborative Research Group, which is a group of Mizzou K-12 instructors, teaching assistants and former students who were already formed for other

purposes, and who have an inherent interest in testing Mizzou K-12 products. The evaluators reached out to this group via email and offered a \$25 electronic gift card to the first three individuals who agreed to complete the observation with an evaluator within a specified number of days. The users who responded included a female who teaches a different course for Mizzou K12; a male, current Mizzou K12 student who at one time took a previous version of English 9A; and a male member of the Mizzou K12 Collaborative Research Group.

The responses provided by these users (see Appendix A) indicated they felt that the automatic feedback provided in the course was useful in guiding them to learn the material better. There are certain sections of the course that provided limited opportunities to redo missed items. Also, some areas presented the solutions and never gave a reason as to why they were correct or incorrect.

One particular method of automatic feedback that stood out in the responses from the users was the Active Reading Guide section of the course. Of the 7 feedback areas each user was directed to work through, 6 received praise from the users as being “good,” “fun,” or “specific and detailed,” to list a few phrases and words to characterize the feedback. However, the Active Reading Guide received a mixed review from the users. One user said he liked it and found that it furthered his thinking about the reading. However, the one of the other two users found the feedback provided in this section to be rather confusing and overwhelming to look at. The last user viewed the section as helpful, but felt it needed a better layout to be user friendly. One user also mentioned they felt that the purpose of the section was rather vague. Figure 1 shows what students would see once they reach that section of the course. Each item is a dropdown box that reveals a possible response.

👤 Active Reading Guide

The Active Reading Guide is just that: your guide to reading and comprehending the text. If you were reading this in a classroom, you would likely read the text out loud together while the teacher interrupts and asks questions to not only make sure that you are properly comprehending the events but also correctly applying literary concepts. This active reading guide helps guide you through the reading in the same way, pointing out sections (or page numbers) for you to look at closely and what to look for. When you encounter a question, think carefully and try to answer for yourself, then click on the question to reveal a possible response. Actively reading while using this guide will not only help prepare you for the close reading exercise but also for the comprehension check and lesson quiz!

▼ (Bottom of Page 65) What elements in this description are more universal and which elements are associated specifically with Chinese culture?

Possible Response:

The struggle between parent and child over control and over access to treats, as well as the narrator's childhood unawareness of poverty, are more universal. The salted plums, mysterious soups, five-course meals, and Chinese baked goods are associated with Chinese culture.

► (Spiral Review - Middle of Page 66) What do details tell you about the cultural environment in which the narrator grew up?

► (Characterization - Bottom of Page 66) What does the quotation, "Was smash flat," reveal about the narrator's mother?

► (Characterization - Middle of Page 67) Why does Waverly ask her mother about Chinese torture and what does the question reveal about Waverly's character?

► (Characterization - Middle of Page 67) What does Mrs. Jong's response to the accusation that Chinese people do torture reveal about her personality?

► (Comprehension - Bottom of Page 67) What gift does Vincent receive at the Christmas party?

► (Characterization - Top of Page 68) What does Waverly's thought process in the first full paragraph reveal indirectly about her character?

► (Cause and Effect - Bottom of Page 68) What effect does the gift of the chess board have on Waverly?

► (Characterization - Middle of Page 69) What do you learn about Vincent based on this conversation?

Figure 1

Instructor Questionnaire

A questionnaire designed to elicit the feedback and experiences of instructors and teaching assistants in English 9A was sent via email to the instructor and the two teaching assistants (all female) involved in teaching the course during the timeframe of the evaluation (see Appendix B). Following expressions of support for the questionnaire and encouragement to complete it from Dr. Galyen, the instructor and one of the two teaching assistants completed it, giving their observations and impressions regarding the efficacy of the feedback model in the course.

The perspectives of both the instructor and the teaching assistant were overwhelmingly positive regarding both the automatically generated feedback and the instructor generated feedback in the course. Both respondents felt that the automatic feedback was effective in fostering student learning, and that the quality of instructor feedback is consistent throughout the course. They also felt that the speed of response by instructors to students was sufficient and that students are well supported based off the feedback and instructor interaction with each individual in the course.

There were a few suggestions from both instructors for a few of the questions posted on the questionnaire. When asked about additional areas of the course that feedback might be

implemented to enhance the student experience, one instructor suggested to either offer the reasoning behind why an answer is correct or incorrect on quizzes, or to provide a reference to the learning material regarding that question in order to help students understand their answers more thoroughly than what the current feedback provides.

One area where the instructors' responses were in disagreement with one another was whether students had adequate opportunities for re-submitting their work after receiving feedback. One instructor stated that there were plenty of opportunities to re-submit assignments, while the other explained that there are some assignments where it is not allowed.

To conclude the questionnaire the evaluators asked the instructors to provide their opinions on how feedback can be enhanced for this course. One instructor suggested that being able to place feedback notes on various assignments or to provide references to objectives and examples for students to look at once an assignment is complete would be helpful.

Evaluator Review

Standards for best practice in online course design and facilitation have been developed by a number of organizations over the last 10-15 years. One of the most widely-referenced organizations to have done so is the Quality Matters organization, which has developed an instrument to assess courses against these standards. Their most recent set of standards, Standards from the Quality Matters Higher Education Rubric, 5th Edition, was developed in 2014 (see Appendix C) and effective feedback to students is identified in the standards as one of the key elements that constitute a quality online course. The evaluation team, consisting of three experienced online educators, assessed the English 9A course against the standards in the Quality Matters rubric that specifically address feedback. A summary of those results are shown in Table 1. The details are found in Appendix C.

Standard	Element Observed (Yes or No)	Summary Comments/Feedback
3.3 Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of learners' work and are tied to the course grading policy.	Yes	Although the course lacks a one-stop, comprehensive document explaining the course grading policy, there are several pieces scattered in the syllabus and across the course that, taken together, achieve this goal.
3.5 The course provides learners with multiple opportunities to track their learning progress.	Yes	Through multiple means, the course meets this standard.
5.3 The instructor's plan for classroom response time and feedback on	No	Based on the information available to the evaluation team, the course doesn't clearly

assignments is clearly stated.		indicate the instructor's plan for response time and providing feedback to students and therefore doesn't meet this standard.
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Table 1

Each of the evaluators found significant evidence demonstrating that English 9A meets standards 3.3 and 3.5 in the Quality Matters rubric. However, the evidence supporting the fulfillment of standard 5.3 is lacking. Specifically, the evaluators could not locate any information showing that the instructor has a clearly stated plan for responding to students and providing feedback on assignments. The course does provide information related to the feedback students will receive for their quizzes, which are automatically graded, but it simply says "you'll quickly receive a report on how you did," which is inadequate to meet the standards. Recommendations for how to mitigate this issue are provided in the Recommendations section of this report in the response to Evaluation Question #2.

Under the "Quizzes and Assignments" section, there is information indicating to students that "After your work has been graded, you will receive a report that provides individualized feedback and comments on your work." This is the only information in the course indicating some sort of a timeline for feedback from the instructor, though it doesn't specify any particular timeframe or other details of the plan in place. There are also no statements or information related to expectations students might be able to have regarding response times to messages and emails they might send to an instructor. It's possible this information could be included in private messages from the instructor to each student, but the evaluation team doesn't have access to these. Absent additional information, the information provided is insufficient to constitute a clear "plan" for instructor response times and feedback.

Student Questionnaire

Despite repeated attempts by the evaluators to encourage participation, the three enrolled students in English 9A declined to participate in any data collection efforts as originally laid out in the formative evaluation plan. This included the student questionnaires that were to have been completed by enrolled students. The reader might wonder why the evaluators didn't simply ask the recruited replacement users for the observations to also complete the questionnaire. The answer to this is that the purposes of the student questionnaire were very different from the purposes of the observations, and the recruited users simply didn't have (nor could they have) the required long term experience in the course to be able to speak to the questions posed by the student questionnaire. Unfortunately, for this reason, the student questionnaire was mostly ineffectual in terms of adding useful data to the study. One of the recruited users actually did complete the questionnaire, and the results of that completion are included in Appendix D if the reader desires to review it, but the mismatch between the characteristics of the user who completed it and the type of user for which the questionnaire was designed make its usefulness mostly negligible for this study.

A discussion of the results of the above mentioned data collection efforts relative to the questions posed by the formative evaluation in the first place follows below, and serves as the Recommendations section of this report.

Recommendations

1. What recommendations can be made to enhance feedback to students?

After analyzing the responses from users, instructors, and experts, the evaluators feel that more descriptive automatic feedback could be provided to students regarding both practice activities and quizzes/assignments. Students are allowed 3 to 5 submissions depending on the assessment. In the case where a student receives a correct or an incorrect designation on one of these assessments with automatic feedback, adding notes or references to objectives and/or content related to the question will help students research the correct information to re-learn the necessary materials on an additional retake. This reasoning as to why their answer is correct or incorrect for each answer would likely enhance the feedback provided to students.

2. Does feedback to students meet industry-standard best practices for online courses?

The feedback model adopted in English 9A meets most of the industry-standard best practices for online courses, however, the course fails to meet the standard indicating that the instructor should have a clearly stated plan for responding to students and providing feedback on assignments.

Recommendation:

To ensure that English 9A meets the Quality Matters standards specifically related to feedback, the evaluation team recommends a clear statement be added to the syllabus indicating expectations a student can reasonably hold regarding instructor response times to emails and messages, as well as timeframes for feedback and grades on work and assignments.

As an example, students could be given a maximum amount of time they may need to wait to get their assignments graded: "For writing assignments submitted before 2:00 PM CST, you will receive a score and feedback within 3 business days of your submission. Assignments submitted after 2:00 PM CST will be graded and returned with feedback within 4 business days. Saturdays, Sundays, and federal holidays observed by Mizzou K12 do not count toward the business day expectations."

3. What recommendations can be made to enhance opportunities for students to rework and resubmit their work following feedback?

Evaluator reviews showed that additional opportunities for rework and resubmission for writing assignments in the course could be enhanced. The current feedback model allows opportunities for students to compose rough drafts in their writing assignments. Once a rough draft is complete, students are encouraged to self-evaluate their work by referring to the rubric provided for the assignment. Students are encouraged to then write a final draft after completing the self-evaluation of their rough draft, which becomes the final draft they submit as their writing assignment. They are also required to submit their rough draft at the same time. This arrangement isn't ideal for providing opportunities for rework and resubmission following feedback. Both the instructor and the teaching assistant who responded acknowledged this limitation, with one saying, in response to the question about whether students have plenty of opportunity for rework and resubmission following feedback, "We encourage it when we can but sometimes know they cannot."

Given the limitations Mizzou K12 has with the self-paced nature of the course and the financial constraints that limit the hiring of too many instructors to evaluate students' work, the current arrangement may be the best that can be done under the current circumstances. However, it is recommended that if at all possible, students be provided an opportunity for instructor feedback on the rough drafts for their numerous writing assignments BEFORE they make revisions and write their final draft.

4. What recommendations can be made to strengthen students' feelings of support from the instructor as they work through the course?

Users and instructors were asked their opinion about student feelings of support from instructors throughout the course. Both the instructor and the teaching assistant who responded expressed that students felt support throughout the course. The individual student survey that was completed by a non-enrolled MK12 student user also indicated that he felt support as a user from the instructors in the English 9A course. The evaluators recommend continued use of the current feedback model in the course to strengthen students' feelings of support from the instructor. Where applicable and appropriate, additional automatic feedback might be implemented, and where financial and course situations allow, additional opportunities for instructor generated feedback might also be implemented.

Additionally, more feedback in certain readings and video sections of the course would be helpful to students. The feedback sections seem to be crammed more towards the end of the unit, which allows students to learn incorrectly as they move throughout the unit without proper feedback points. An exercise or mini-quiz/practice section would likely enhance student learning after each section.

Limitations

As has been mentioned, the evaluators were unable to collect data from any of the three students enrolled in the course. The main concern about this for the evaluators is that it means this study includes no data from the very audience that likely has the best perspective about the effectiveness of the new feedback model implemented in the course. The recruited users were a second choice, but as has been mentioned, their motivations for being in the course and their level of experience in the content area likely differed greatly from the actual, authentic, intended audience for the course, which makes this group a distant second choice. The evaluators recognize this flaw in our available sample group, and recommend that this study be a jumping off point for further study, preferably using future enrollees in the English 9A course to confirm the results shown in this study. The evaluators recommend using the same instruments for comparability between studies, and for the purpose of reducing the effort needed to conduct the study.

Beyond the limitations caused by the sample group, the evaluators also acknowledge that this study addresses the efficacy of the feedback model as it has been implemented in a single course: English 9A. While it is the opinion of the evaluators that the feedback model would work as well in other subject areas, that is not a question that was broached in this study, therefore it is not supported by data from this study.

One other limitation of this study is the online course quality standards utilized by the evaluators to assess the feedback utilized in English 9A. The standards utilized were designed specifically for online courses offered in higher education settings, not high school settings. These standards were used because they were readily available, but there may be additional standards, or a reduction of standards in rubrics designed specifically for high school online courses. The evaluators recommend that further studies include a review of rubrics and standards for high school courses.

Summary

Based on the results of this study, the feedback model implemented in English 9A is viewed as effective in fostering learning by users in the course. Feedback still needs to be laid out better in certain areas along with allowing students to learn why something is right or wrong for each problem. Receiving more input from current and future students will help shape the course to better provide an automated response system. Instructors were positive in their course outlook, but believed there should be a consistent amount of feedback along with a limited amount of improvement chances on quizzes. Further research should be conducted to improve the English 9A course for future students.

Lessons Learned

The first and most important change in this study would be having a larger sample size to prevent the limitations previously described. A three-person group is not likely to be large enough to provide sufficient data for a study such as this one.

If more time was permitted, longer and more thorough observations could be completed, allowing observers to analyze more of the curriculum than what time allowed. Having the goal of improving feedback in the course requires the entire course to be evaluated, but with the limited time we had only parts of the course could be observed with student involvement.

In addition, the demographics of the observers and the learners made it difficult to schedule ample time to complete the observations. If an online evaluation is required among multiple parties in different parts of the world again, the observers will need to contact the students much further in advance. This option would allow more room for error, cancellations, schedule changes, etc.

In future studies on this course, the client would benefit from informing students of the study beforehand, explaining what is entailed and how they will be contacted by observers, and to have rewards previously decided such as gift cards or discounts on future classes for those that participate.

In the future, if the same study is required by the client, more time and observations will be required. An increase in student attendance will be needed to gather more sufficient data. Demographics will also need to be considered for the study to prevent time discrepancies for scheduled observations and interviews.

References

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Appendix A

Observations of users in the course

User #1 (male), Date: April 27, 2017				
Feedback Point	Type	Helpful	Not Helpful	Additional Feedback
Reading 2.1 - Active Reading Guide	Numerous Dropdown boxes		X	Student was confused as to what he was supposed to actually do with the drop down boxes. He felt the organization was too cluttered, and did not properly explain itself in the description above. If the description for the guide was more clear, and the drop down boxes were either broken up into smaller sections, or into smaller pages in the module it would be more effective.
READING 2.1 - CLOSE READING EXERCISE	Teacher Feedback	N/A	N/A	Did not complete.
READING 2.1 - VOCABULARY QUIZ	Auto Feedback at End	X		Student completed the quiz quickly, and almost missed one. It is explanatory and the student understood what he missed, and why he received correct information.
READING 2.1 - COMPREHENSION CHECK	Auto Feedback at End	X		Student completed the quiz after reading the directions. He only missed 1 question. He felt the questions, answers, and feedback were clearly stated. He was impressed with the feedback for the questions he correctly answered; he felt they verified his choices and said it's a positive experience for students to read.
Subjects and Predicates	Practice w/ feedback	X		Student was impressed with the level of feedback for the practice. He enjoyed that the program didn't give him the right answers, but hints were displayed to remind him of the rules of subjects and predicates. He also liked that the right answers were highlighted in green, while the wrong answers were highlighted in red for him to see and understand his mistakes without having to completely guess what he had to do over and over.

Active and Passive Voice	Practice w/ feedback		X	The instructions were clear and the student received 100% on his assignment. I had him go through it again and miss a question on purpose just to see what the feedback was. The student liked that he could see what was missed and the color coordination (green for correct and red for incorrect). However, he stated that it wasn't informative when the answers were correct or incorrect. He suggested that a confirmation be added to the correct answers explaining why the student chose the correct answers, and a quick reminder about active and passive voices be provided when a student made the incorrect choice. Otherwise, students could just blow through the assignment and retry everything without an explanation as to why they are right or wrong.
GRAMMAR CHALLENGE 2	Auto Feedback at End	X		Student completed the grammar challenge on his own and received 100%. He e-mailed me that the feedback was just like the other quizzes he completed. A confirmation of his correct answer was provided to give the student confidence, and a further explanation as to why they chose the correct answer. He took the quiz again and missed one question on purpose, and said the feedback was great to give him hints on why he missed the question so he could have a better understanding before taking the quiz again.
Writing Assignment 2 - Introduction	Teacher Feedback - Rubric	X		Student read the rubric and explained each aspect to me to show that it is clear. He didn't actually complete the assignment and wait for instructor feedback, but he clearly explained the expectations of the assignment without any confusion.
Lesson 2 - Quiz	Auto Feedback at End	N/A	N/A	Did not complete.

User #2 (male), Date/Time: April 26, 2017, 9:15pm CST

Feedback Point	Type	Helpful	Not Helpful	Additional Feedback
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Reading 2.1 - Active Reading Guide	Numerous Dropdown boxes	X		"I like this. It furthers students' thinking with possible responses."
READING 2.1 - CLOSE READING EXERCISE	Teacher Feedback	N/A	N/A	There was no feedback to evaluate, so no comment from User #2.
READING 2.1 - VOCABULARY QUIZ	Auto Feedback at End	X		"Good. The hint part right away helped to increase understanding."
READING 2.1 - COMPREHENSION CHECK	Auto Feedback at End	X		"It asks questions. That's good. I like this. Student can recall questions. I like feedback that encourages the student to review the content."
Subjects and Predicates	Practice w/ feedback	X		"I like this; the way it's highlighted. I like that it's green. I like the crossing out. I like the 'show solution' button. Good for visual learners"
Active and Passive Voice	Practice w/ feedback	X		"I like this because after you drag it, students can see it as a game. Points also make it more fun."
GRAMMAR CHALLENGE 2	Auto Feedback at End	X		"I like this because it uses language students understand. Drop down boxes in the questions help different learners."
Writing Assignment 2 - Introduction	Teacher Feedback - Rubric	N/A	N/A	There was no feedback to evaluate, so no comment from User #2.
Lesson 2 - Quiz	Auto Feedback at End	X		"Some of these help, but not as helpful as the previous feedback provided"
In answer to the question of if there was ever a spot where he had wished additional feedback was available in the course, his answer was "No. Everything was very detailed. No other feedback is needed."				

User #3 (female), Date/Time: April 27, 2017, 9:00am EST				
Feedback Point	Type	Helpful	Not Helpful	Additional Feedback
Reading 2.1 - Active Reading Guide	Numerous Dropdown boxes		X	Too overwhelming, so need to redo. Maybe break it up better as the reasoning for this feedback is not clear. Feedback presented is not very helpful.
READING 2.1 - CLOSE READING EXERCISE	Teacher Feedback	X		Feedback is very specific and detailed.

READING 2.1 - VOCABULARY QUIZ	Auto Feedback at End	X		Feedback is very specific and detailed.
READING 2.1 - COMPREHENSION CHECK	Auto Feedback at End	X		Makes sure students understands what is read and point them back to the text for answers if not sure or correct.
Subjects and Predicates	Practice w/ feedback	X		Answers need to be explained better and star progress is not explained unless it was outlined at the beginning of the course.
Active and Passive Voice	Practice w/ feedback	X		Answers need to be explained better and star progress is not explained unless it was outlined at the beginning of the course.
GRAMMAR CHALLENGE 2	Auto Feedback at End	X		Good reinforcement for students, but too many choices in drop-down boxes. Partial correct answers are highlighted but never made clear as to which part. That could frustrate students if they struggle. All passive questions are asked, but maybe change one to active?
Writing Assignment 2 - Introduction	Teacher Feedback - Rubric	X		Rubric is very specific and clear about requirements. Mostly a presentation with slides showing how to write the assignment, which is good.
Lesson 2 - Quiz	Auto Feedback at End	X		Some questions are from previous quizzes and feedback is not needed here at this point. Should be called a test?
Question - If there was ever a spot where additional feedback should be made available in the course, her answer was that everything was detailed and no other feedback was needed.				

Appendix B

Instructor Evaluation Responses

Sent from either MK12 leadership or from evaluation team directly:

"We're currently conducting an evaluation on our new English 9A. Would you be willing to spend a few minutes of your time (or more if possible!) to provide your feedback? It should be quite beneficial to us and our program to get the necessary feedback from our teachers and TAs in order to keep Mizzou K-12 moving in the right direction. Most questions are just yes or no questions or questions that require very short answers. In the interest of your time, please don't feel the need to elaborate unless the question requires a longer answer, or you would like to elaborate. Also, as an FYI, when we compile the results, we plan to remove names from responses, in case anyone is concerned about that. Thanks so much for your time and please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions."

Instructors #1 and #2

Survey responses from Instructor #1 and Instructor #2, Instructor and Teaching Assistant respectively in English 9A

Received via email, Thursday, April 20, 2017.

1. How well does the feedback model implemented in this course, work?
I think the model works VERY well. Breaking down key ideas and giving students targeted feedback throughout a lesson keeps the information fresh and helps to highlight key ideas.

It works for me. I have a few questions about it. I like being able to give feedback and the students can respond if they want to
2. Do you feel the automatic feedback given to students is effective?
Yes. Sample responses provide guidance and direction.

Yes, I see growth from the beginning of class to the last lesson.
3. Does the automatic feedback help students achieve the course objectives?
Yes.
4. Are all instructors implementing the feedback in the same way?
The number of instructors are limited at this point, but it certainly appears consistent to this point.

I monitor the TAs work and they seem to be very consistent from one to the other.
5. Do you feel the feedback is provided in a timely manner for students to utilize effectively?
Yes.

Yes
6. Is there sufficient time to provide personalized feedback to each student?
Yes. The breakdown of tasks into smaller, more targeted assignments makes grading more efficient and allows for more focused and customized feedback.

Yes, I do not think we can do it faster. In most traditional classrooms there is probably a longer turn-around time for teacher to student

7. In what areas would you like to see additional feedback provided to the students?

On the quizzes, when an answer is marked incorrect, I would like for students to see not only which answer is correct, but also some brief information about WHY it is the correct answer or a direction about where the information can be found in the textbook or on the course site.

No response

8. Do you feel students receive plenty of feedback in this course?

Yes.

I do

9. Do students get plenty of opportunity to rework and resubmit assignments?

Yes.

We encourage it when we can but sometimes now they cannot

10. Is the automatic feedback accurate and relevant?

Yes.

Yes

11. How well do you think students feel support from you as they go through the course?

My impression is that students feel very supported. There are many opportunities for guidance and self-check that comes from the course author, but also considerable interaction in the assignments and surveys. Students in this course have lots of engagement with instructors, which I think is really wonderful.

I get nice notes from them so I think they are okay. Sometimes it takes the student a long time to look at a note on Canvas.

12. Do you feel students are satisfied with the feedback received in this course?

They seem to be! My impression is that questions are being answered effectively along the way and that students have a clearer understanding of what is expected from their larger writing assignments once they get to those at the end of a lesson.

Yes

13. In what ways can feedback to students be enhanced?

We do not currently have grading notes posted, and we probably could offer some feedback samples that direct students back to specific learning objectives for instructors to access quickly and keep students on task. Overall, though, feedback looks really strong!

It has taken some time for me to learn how to contact a student one on one if needed especially if they have not responded to feedback

Appendix C

Evaluator Review using Quality Matters Standards that address feedback

Standard	Element Observed (Yes or No)	Summary Comments/Feedback
3.3 Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of learners' work and are tied to the course grading policy. (ES) Learners are provided with a clear and complete description of the criteria that will be used to evaluate their work and participation in the course. These criteria are stated upfront at the beginning of the course. The description or statement of criteria provides learners with clear guidance on the instructor's expectations and on the required components of coursework and participation. The criteria give learners the information they need to understand how a grade on an assignment or activity will be calculated. As a reviewer, confirm that the criteria used to evaluate learners' performance aligns with the course objectives or competencies. Note, however, that you are not asked to look for and evaluate the instructor's specific feedback to learners in Standard 3.3. Your focus is the design of the course, not the delivery of the course. Examples of what to look for: 1. Evidence that the instructor has stated the criteria for evaluation of all graded work. Criteria may be in the form of a detailed checklist, rubric, or other instrument for identifying the various levels of learner mastery.	Yes	Comments/Feedback: Evaluator #1: Although the course lacks a one-stop, comprehensive document in the syllabus area explaining the course grading policy, there are several pieces scattered in the syllabus and across the course that achieve this goal. The statement about grade weightings and the grading scale in the syllabus both communicate to students part of the overall grading policy, and the section in the syllabus providing advice about taking objective examinations also contributes valuable information about how grading will happen in this course. Taken together, these elements, combined with detailed rubrics that are found with all significant writing assignments, make up an overall grading policy for the course. This grading policy is aligned with the objectives of the course as stated in the course syllabus. Recommendation: The evaluation team recommends consolidating the pieces of information that describe grading policy into one comprehensive document located in the syllabus area of the course. In addition, the close reading assignments found in each lesson lack clear grading criteria. The inclusion of a short paragraph or a rubric similar to the writing assignments would be helpful for clarification on how these assignments will be evaluated. Evaluator #2: Students are given access to a syllabus,

2. A description of the how learners' participation in discussions will be graded, including the number of required postings per week; the criteria for evaluating the originality and quality of learners' comments and their responsiveness to classmates' comments; and the grade or credit learners can expect for varying levels of performance.		providing general information regarding course and assignment expectations. A grading policy is provided for a full understanding of grading procedures. In Chapter 1 the students are introduced to the Journal assignment they will be creating. Detailed information regarding how students will be graded is provided, including a checklist of required materials. One suggestion is to mention how often students will be creating the journals (weekly, daily, every assignment or chapter, etc.) so students understand how often the journal is required. Evaluator #3: Feedback is given in detail along with explicitly stated rubrics for writing assignments. Discussions are not evident in the course. All criteria align with course objectives.
3.5 The course provides learners with multiple opportunities to track their learning progress. (VIS) Learning is more effective if learners receive frequent, substantive, and timely feedback. The feedback may come from the instructor directly, from assignments and assessments that have feedback built into them, or even from other learners. Look for examples of self-check quizzes and activities, as well as other types of practice opportunities that provide timely feedback. Such assignments may be voluntary and/or allow multiple attempts. Examples: 1. Writing assignments that allow for the submission of a draft for instructor comment and suggestions for improvement 2. Self-mastery tests that include informative feedback with each answer choice 3. Interactive games and simulations that have feedback built in 4. Self-scoring practice quizzes	Yes	Comments/Feedback: Evaluator #1: Through multiple means, the course meets this standard. Details follow below. Active Reading Guides provide built-in, anticipatory feedback—typically a sentence or two of explanation. Close Reading Exercises do the same thing. These allow the student to compare his/her answer to an acceptable alternate answer. All objective exams/quizzes identify the correct answer and provide general comments to responses immediately upon submission. Though the comments are general, they are substantive in that they provide a rationale for the correct answer and give hints for achieving the correct answer when you get it wrong. Multiple attempts are allowed. Writing assignments require the creation of rough and final drafts, though feedback is not provided on rough drafts, so the only feedback received is from final drafts. Self-check against the rubric is encouraged when the rough draft is complete.

5. Practice written assignments 6. Peer reviews and critiques 7. Model papers or essays provided for learners' viewing 8. Sample answers or answer keys provided for learners' viewing 9. Portfolios with a self-evaluation component, journals, and reflection papers		Recommendation: Students would gain additional benefit from feedback that is specific for each answer and distractor. This can be done via Canvas. Additionally, for writing assignments, given the self-paced nature of this course, model papers or essays might also be made available for writing assignments—perhaps after a rough draft has been submitted. Evaluator #2: Students are provided with multiple assignments requiring various types of feedback. For example, students complete quizzes and tests with automatic feedback provided, and also turn in writing assignments with instructor feedback provided after a period of time. Students are also given practice questions (for example in Lesson 2) which provide feedback on sentence structure. The one aspect missing is practice quizzes and practice writing submissions. Students are required to create their own rough drafts throughout the course for writing assignments, but they keep these rough drafts in their own journals and turn them in when the writing assignment is due. If possible with time and resources allowing, provide students a few opportunities to submit these drafts for grading to an evaluator for feedback. Once the student completes a few of these writing assignments, he/she should be able to start turning in final drafts without the need of graded rough drafts. Evaluator #3: All items listed in the examples are evident throughout the course. Self-check quizzes, writing assignments, journals, etc. are thorough and involved during the course.
5.3 The instructor's plan for classroom response time and feedback on assignments is clearly stated. (ES) Frequent feedback from the instructor increases learners' sense of engagement in	No	Comments/Feedback: Evaluator #1: Based on the information available to the evaluation team, the course doesn't indicate the instructor's plan for response

a course. Learners are better able to manage their course activities when they know upfront when to expect feedback from the instructor. The course provides clear information about when learners will receive instructor responses to emails and discussion postings, feedback on assignments, and grades. This information typically appears in the course syllabus. If it is necessary to alter the response-time standards during the course, the adjustment is clearly communicated to learners. Note to reviewers: You are not evaluating the instructor's plan; you are primarily ensuring the instructor has provided a plan. If you have suggestions for how to improve the plan, you might include them in your recommendations; but the suggestions should not affect your decision about whether the Standard is met. Competency-Based Courses: Interaction with the instructor, facilitator, coach, mentor, or assessor may take different forms. The course introduction indicates the various forms of faculty and staff support available to the learner and explains when learners can expect to receive feedback.	time and providing feedback to students and therefore doesn't meet this standard. Additional details follow below. Information is provided related to the feedback students will receive for their quizzes, which are automatically graded: "you'll quickly receive a report on how you did." Under the "Quizzes and Assignments" section, there is information indicating to students that "After your work has been graded, you will receive a report that provides individualized feedback and comments on your work." This is the only information in the course indicating some sort of a timeline for feedback from the instructor, though it doesn't specify any particular timeframe or other details of the plan in place. There are also no statements or information related to expectations students might be able to have regarding response times to messages and emails they might send to an instructor. It's possible this information may have been included in private messages from the instructor, but the evaluation team doesn't have access to these. Absent additional information, the information provided is insufficient to constitute a clear "plan" for instructor response times and feedback. Recommendation: The evaluation team recommends a clear statement in the syllabus indicating expectations a student can reasonably hold regarding instructor response times to emails and messages, as well as timeframes for feedback and grades on work and assignments. Evaluator #2: It is clearly stated that students will receive feedback from an instructor, but I was unable to locate any plan informing students of a time frame of when to expect assignments to be graded. Suggestion: give students a maximum
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		amount of time their assignments should be graded. For example: “For writing assignments submitted before 2:00 PM CST, you will receive a score and feedback within 3 business days of your submission. Assignments submitted after 2:00 PM CST will be graded and returned with feedback within 4 business days. Saturdays, Sundays, and federal holidays observed by Missouri K12 do not count toward the business day expectations.” Evaluator #3: Course syllabus explains all aspects of the course in complete detail. Feedback is stated along with the expected timeframe that a student should expect their grade.
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Appendix D

Student Questionnaire

One response submitted by an MK12 student not enrolled in the course, but who worked through parts of an evaluation section of it.

Date: April 27, 2017				
1. I receive feedback on my work right when I need it.				
Strongly Agree				
2. The feedback I receive is always correct.				
Strongly Agree				
3. The feedback I receive always relates to what I'm working on.				
Strongly Agree				
4. I'm satisfied with the automatic feedback the course gives me on my work.				
Strongly Agree				
5. I always get plenty of feedback in this course.				
Strongly Agree				
7. The feedback I receive helps me do better work.				
Strongly Agree				
8. The feedback I receive helps me better understand the course material.				
Strongly Agree				
9. I wish automatic feedback were given on more assignments.				
	Agree			
10. I've always felt supported by my instructor.				
	Agree			
11. I always feel like I know how I'm doing in the course.				
		Neutral		

12. I have plenty of opportunities to re-work and re-submit my work to improve my understanding.

Agree

12. I would like more optional, ungraded practice activities in the course.

Agree

13. What types of feedback would you like to see that you aren't receiving already?

The feedback is very good and doesn't need anything else. The course improved tons since I was a student in it before.

14. What course activities do you need more feedback on?

Some of the practice questions could have a little more feedback if there is nothing there. Other than that I was happy with the feedback I received.

15. How can the feedback you receive in this course be improved?

I like the automatic feedback on the quizzes. More automatic feedback helps students like me immediately understand missed questions.

Evaluation Plan

English 9A

University of Missouri High School

Produced by DMS Collaborative
(David Cripe, Marc Lundstrom, Stephen Solen)

March 2017



English 9A

University of Missouri High School



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Executive Summary

This document is the plan for an external evaluation on the English 9A online course created and hosted by the University of Missouri High School. The focus of the evaluation is on the feedback model employed in the course, and the plans include both a formative evaluation and a summative evaluation. The High School has requested an external evaluation to help determine the effectiveness of the methods currently used to provide feedback to students, including personal teacher to student feedback and pre-written feedback delivered by the technology at appropriate times.

The methods utilized in this study are varied and include student questionnaires, student focus groups, direct student observation by the evaluation team, instructor interviews and evaluator reviews in order to determine the effectiveness of the current feedback processes. Because students enrolled in the course are spread over different countries, both the formative and summative evaluations will be completed using primarily online resources and technology. Intended outcomes of the evaluation include the generation of ideas about how to provide additional feedback to students and how to do so without exhausting teacher resources or incurring additional costs.

Introduction

The English 9A online course is a self-paced, independent study course that fills the English 9 standards set by the State of Missouri. The course was developed by the University of Missouri High School. Dr. Krista Galyen, Director of Research, Development and Evaluation for the High School is seeking data on the effectiveness of the model utilized for delivering course feedback to the students. Specifically, Dr. Galyen is interested in ideas about how to increase feedback to the students without increasing the budgeted teacher time and financial resources allotted to the course.

The evaluation plan has been developed by University of Missouri graduate students David Cripe, Marc Lundstrom, and Stephen Solen. Marc is an instructional design professional currently earning his PhD, while David and Stephen are experienced online education professionals earning Education Specialist and Master's degrees respectively. Through the evaluation of feedback given to currently enrolled students in the course, and through additional questions posed through student feedback surveys and focus groups, the evaluators intend to discover and generate ideas to increase the quantity and quality of assignment feedback to students without increasing the teacher workload or incurring additional costs to the University of Missouri High School.

Background

The University of Missouri High School created the original version of the self-paced online English 9A course in the year 2000 to provide English 9 credits for those seeking an alternative path to earning English credit through courses taught by traditional high schools. Since its original debut, multiple students have completed the course successfully; however, the High School did not feel the class was designed to fully support the best student learning possible.

Online school courses are convenient programs that allow students to work on courses at their own pace while at the same time, providing the same course materials to meet State and Federal standards toward graduation. The enrollment for online courses has been on the rise since 2003 (Sheehy, 2013), providing students all over the world alternate, accredited courses. One downfall that plagues online courses is productive and personalized feedback to students within a reasonable amount of time.

In 2016, the English 9A course at the University of Missouri High School was redesigned with the intent to promote student success through additional feedback opportunities. It was also designed to align with the University of Missouri High School philosophy on how high school students should be taught, namely, that the student should be supported along the way, giving ample feedback and opportunities to resubmit work based on the feedback provided. In many courses at the High School, feedback is provided to students through the grading activities of teaching assistants (TAs), who are paid on a per-piece basis, meaning, that each TA is paid per assignment he or she grades. This way of providing that all-important instructor feedback, however, is expensive, and budget constraints required the University of Missouri High School to consider alternative (non-human), automatic feedback possibilities to students to continue enhancing their learning throughout the course, which is the very model which has been implemented in the redesigned English 9A course, and which the evaluation team will be looking at closely.

In its redesigned state, English 9A is currently a live, final product on a production server and will be actively used by students during the time the evaluation is being conducted. Typically, enrolled students will have six months to complete the course from start to finish on his/her own pace.

The main objectives of English 9A are below (from the syllabus):

- be able to read, interpret, and analyze a variety of texts

- be able to recognize, understand, and interpret meaning of literary devices such as figurative language, story and poem structure, author's purpose, and structures of different types of writing
- be able to respond to literature in writing that is well organized with an introduction, body with supporting details, and conclusion

Challenges the evaluation team will experience in conducting this evaluation include the following:

1. Only three students are currently registered in the course, decreasing the number of possible observations available to the evaluators.
2. Student and evaluator locations may not align well; students and evaluators are located in different time zones.
3. The Students are minors. This results in the need to be extra cautious in planning for contact with the users of the course and will result in the need for additional planning and coordination.

Formative Evaluation

Purposes (Formative)

The purpose of the formative evaluation is to discover if there are ways that the course feedback model employed in the course can better serve the needs of current and future students. Intended outcomes of the formative evaluation, as well as the decisions and actions stemming from it include that the feedback model employed in the English 9A course will be improved upon in order to enhance student learning.

Stakeholders (Formative)

The client for this formative evaluation is the University of Missouri High School. They recently completed a redesign of their English 9A course and would like to see if the feedback portion of the course is adequate and what improvements could be made to assist students more directly. The primary audience is Dr. Krista Galyen and the secondary audience is the instructors of the English 9A course.

The relevant stakeholders are the University of Missouri High School, Dr. Krista Galyen, English 9A instructors, and the students in the course. Information regarding student activity and experiences in the course, and student opinions and desires for the course will be the source of much of the data in the formative evaluation. In the end, Dr. Galyen will receive those results in order to further improve the course feedback. In this way, the intent is that future students will be positively affected by the results of this formative evaluation.

Decisions (Formative)

The results of the formative evaluation of English 9A will likely influence multiple decisions regarding this course. Among these are the following anticipated decisions:

1. Decisions about whether the technology-mediated feedback mechanisms in the course need revision.
2. Decisions about whether additional feedback opportunities should be implemented in the course.
3. Decisions about other feedback formats that would be appropriate for the course.

Each of these decisions relates to the feedback model employed in this course, which is the focus of the formative evaluation. The data will help to show how effective the feedback model as currently implemented is for this course. Since technology-mediated feedback is a big part of the model, data on the effectiveness of this feedback will help determine whether it needs to be redesigned or revised. The evaluation also intends to answer the question of whether or not the existing feedback mechanisms are sufficient. Whether or not they are sufficient will help determine whether or not additional feedback mechanisms are necessary to bring feedback to a sufficient level. In the event other feedback mechanisms are recommended, this evaluation intends to provide recommendations of possible formats to consider.

Questions (Formative)

The following questions will help to both inform the decisions mentioned above and accomplish the formative purposes of the evaluation.

1. What recommendations can be made to enhance feedback to students?
2. Does feedback to students meet industry-standard best practices for online courses?
3. What recommendations can be made to enhance opportunities for students to rework and resubmit their work following feedback?
4. What recommendations can be made to strengthen students' feelings of support from the instructor as they work through the course?

Participant Sample (Formative)

The participants of the formative evaluation will include students, instructors and teaching assistants. The users consist of the students enrolled in English 9A who range in age from 13 to 16. The sample size will be small (3) due to limited enrollments in this relatively new course. The evaluators will attempt to discover how much the students feel the course should be improved upon in the area of providing detailed feedback. Instructors of the English 9A course will be invited to participate in order to gather their unique perspective about the efficacy of the current feedback model in the course. The number of instructor participants will also be limited, due to the fact the course is limited in attendance. Dr. Krista Galyen will be the primary contact for the University of Missouri

High School, providing valuable background and context about the program and the institution.

Method (Formative)

The evaluation of English 9A will involve a number of evaluation methods. They include the following:

- Administration of a questionnaire to students enrolled in the course
- Observations of student use of the course, specifically focusing on the course elements involving feedback
- Individual Interviews with the instructors and teaching assistants for the course
- Evaluator review of the feedback methods implemented in the course

Each enrolled student user of the course will be invited to complete an electronic questionnaire about their experience using the course (see Appendix A). The questionnaire will facilitate the collection of data regarding how the current feedback methods used in the course help or hinder their success. Face to face interaction with students for this particular step is expected to be unnecessary, as the questionnaires will be distributed electronically via email. Using a questionnaire as a data collection instrument for this task is helpful because the data being collected is relatively simple, thus reducing the time and resources needed to complete the formative evaluation. The questionnaire will be created and delivered through Google Forms and the data will be collected in a Google Spreadsheet for analysis. The data analysis method to be used will be counts and frequencies.

Each enrolled student will also be invited to participate in a web conference with the evaluation team wherein each student will be asked to navigate one course module as the team observes their behavior in the course. The student will also be invited to think aloud as they are experiencing the course and receiving feedback on their work in the course. The evaluation team will observe and listen using the screen sharing function in the Zoom web conferencing system. The evaluation team will record the session and take notes. Data analysis methods on the collected data will include counts and frequencies.

Instructors teaching the English 9A course at the University of Missouri High School will be invited to participate in an interview with the evaluation team regarding their

experiences teaching this course. Questions will focus mostly on their experience with the feedback methods available to them in teaching the course, which includes the technology-mediated feedback provided without their direct input (see Appendix B, Section 1). They will be asked whether they feel the feedback model implemented in the course gives students sufficient feedback and adequately facilitates their success. The interviews will be conducted by the evaluation team via the Zoom web conferencing software. The evaluation team will record the sessions and take notes. Data analysis methods on the collected data will include counts and frequencies.

Evaluator Review through direct observation will also be conducted in order to evaluate the efficacy of the feedback model being utilized in the English 9A course. The members of evaluation team, all three experienced online teachers and one of them an instructional designer, will navigate and analyze the course modules, assignments, activities, assessments and feedback opportunities to evaluate the feedback model being used. They will evaluate the feedback model employed in the course against criteria adopted and espoused by an industry-standard rubric for evaluating online course quality, “Standards from the Quality Matters™ Higher Education Rubric, 5th Edition,” standards 3.3, 3.5, and 5.3 (see Appendix C). The specific areas referenced for this instrument speaks to the best practices surrounding providing feedback to students in online courses. These three evaluators will record their individual observations in word documents and will then compile and analyze the data. Interaction with the students will be unnecessary with this method.

The methods described above were designed to help address questions generated by this formative evaluation. Table 1 shows the relationship between the questions and the evaluation methods.

	Methods			
	User Review (Student)	Observation	User Review (Instructor)	Evaluator Review
Formative Evaluation Questions				
What recommendations can be made to enhance feedback to students?	X	X	X	X

Does feedback to students meet industry-standard best practices for online courses?	X	X	X	X
What recommendations can be made to enhance opportunities for students to rework and resubmit their work following feedback?	X	X	X	
What recommendations can be made to strengthen students' feelings of support from the instructor as they work through the course?	X	X	X	

Table 1

Table 2 shows both the data collection instruments and the data analysis methods that will be used as part of the evaluation methods that will be utilized in the formative evaluation.

Evaluation Methods	Data Collection Instruments	Data Analysis Methods
User Review (Student)	Student Questionnaire	Counts, Frequencies
Observation	Student Observation	Counts, Frequencies
User Review (Instructor)	Instructor Interview	Counts, Frequencies
Evaluator Review	Evaluation against standards	Counts, Frequencies

Table 2

Logistics (Formative)

All three members of the evaluation team (David Cripe, Marc Lundstrom, and Stephen Solen) will coordinate the implementation of this evaluation plan in different sections. Marc Lundstrom will coordinate scheduling and data transmission with any personnel at the University of Missouri High School, including Dr. Krista Galyen, who is the course manager for the High School. All three members of the team will be responsible for processing, analyzing, and interpreting data. Stephen Solen and David Cripe will be

responsible for organizing and reporting data to the course manager at the High School. Additional details about the logistics are found in the timeline section of this plan, including due dates for deliverables.

Timelines (Formative)

The evaluation plan is the original plan before completion of the evaluation in May 2017. The final evaluation plan will be reviewed, revised, and approved by Dr. Moore before the evaluation team goes forward with implementing the evaluation. The initial data collection phase of the evaluation itself, beginning with student observation and a student questionnaire, will begin no later than March 28, 2017. The first progress report will be submitted by April 4, 2017, and subsequent reports will be submitted weekly each Tuesday. The final report of the research study will be submitted no later than May 2, 2017.

Budget (Formative)

Item	Qty	Cost per pc.	Total cost
Personnel time			
Formative planning (hours)	32	45.00	1440.00
Data collection and analysis (hours)	60	45.00	2700.00
Formative Report (hours)	55	45.00	2475.00
Zoom Pro web conferencing subscription (monthly rate)	4	20.00	80.00
Rev.com transcription service (per minute rate)	400	1.25	500.00
Total			7195.00

Summative Evaluation

Purposes (Summative)

The purpose of the summative evaluation for English 9A is to help determine the future of the English 9A feedback model at the University of Missouri High School. Is it a model that should be discontinued, or should it be expanded for use in other courses at the High School? And if it should be expanded, what are the implications of that for things like training instructors and funding allocations? These are the type of questions the summative evaluation is intended to answer. In essence, the summative evaluation of this course is an effectiveness evaluation and the intended outcome of the evaluation is the establishment of a direction for the future of the feedback model which is the subject of the evaluation.

Stakeholders (Summative)

The client for this summative evaluation is the University of Missouri High School. They recently completed a redesign of their English 9A course and would like to see if the feedback portion of the course is adequate and whether it makes sense to use it more widely in other courses. The primary audience is Dr. Krista Galyen, along with other Mizzou K12 Administrators, and the secondary audience is the instructors of the English 9A course.

The relevant stakeholders are the University of Missouri High School, Dr. Krista Galyen, English 9A instructors, and the students in the course. Information regarding student activity and experiences in the course, and student opinions and desires for the course will be the source of much of the data in the summative evaluation. Information regarding instructor opinions will also play a larger role in the summative evaluation. In the end, Dr. Galyen will receive those results in order to decisions about the future of the feedback model employed in the course. In this way, the intent is that future students will be positively affected by the results of this summative evaluation.

Decisions (Summative)

The results of the summative evaluation of English 9A will likely influence multiple decisions regarding this course. Among these are the following anticipated decisions:

1. Decisions about whether this model for feedback should continue to be used for this course.
2. Decisions about whether additional funds need to be allocated toward this course and other courses that may use this feedback model (since feedback in University of Missouri High School courses is limited by the High School's pay-per-piece model of TA grading).
3. Decisions about whether elements of the model for feedback implemented in this course should be used in other courses at the University of Missouri High School.
4. Decisions about how instructors should be trained to teach this course or other courses that use this feedback model.

We anticipate that the decisions this summative evaluation can impact will be decisions that will shape future University of Missouri High School courses. The High School was excited to roll out this new English 9A course in part because of the new feedback model they had implemented and they are very anxious to see how well the model works to foster student success. The results of this summative evaluation will help to answer that question, and will affect whether or not the High School expands the use of the model to other courses and subjects, or whether the model needs revision or even scrapping altogether.

Questions (Summative)

1. In what ways do the results and recommendations from the formative evaluation inform the anticipated decisions of whether or not this model for feedback should continue to be used for this course?
2. Are there other low-cost feedback mechanisms that could be used effectively in this course?
3. What elements of the feedback model employed in this course could be effectively used in other courses?
4. In what ways would the feedback model employed in this course need to be modified in order to be effective in other courses?
5. What elements of the training provided for instructors of this course could be effectively used in future training for courses that utilize this feedback model?

Participant Sample (Summative)

The participants of the summative evaluation will include students, instructors, members of the evaluation team, and Dr. Krista Galyen. The users consist of the students enrolled in English 9A who range in age from 13 to 16. The sample size will be small (3) due to limited enrollments in this relatively new course. The evaluators will attempt to discover how the students feel that elements of the feedback model can and should be implemented in other courses at the High School. Instructors of the English 9A course will be invited to participate in order to gather their unique perspective about the training they received in using this feedback model, as well as what kind of training perhaps ought to be provided, if the model is more widely adopted. The number of instructor participants will also be limited, due to the fact the course is limited in attendance. Dr. Krista Galyen will also provide her unique perspective regarding the training required for a successful implementation of this feedback model. She will also be the primary contact for the University of Missouri High School, providing valuable background and context about the program and the institution.

Method (Summative)

The summative evaluation of English 9A will involve the following evaluation methods:

- Analysis of the data of the formative evaluation to determine what results and recommendations are relevant for the summative evaluation
- A focus group with students enrolled in the course
- Individual Interviews with the instructors of the course

As the evaluation team analyzed and discussed the questions that needed to be addressed in a summative evaluation, it became clear that many of the questions we needed answers to for the summative evaluation were included as main questions in the formative evaluation. This is why one of the main questions for the summative evaluation is how the results of the formative evaluation can inform the decisions for the summative evaluation. We also noted that, while the anticipated decisions for the formative and summative evaluations are different, the data that will inform those decisions happen to be the same. This is because both sets of decisions hinge on how well the feedback is meeting the needs of students in the course. Therefore, an analysis of the data, results and recommendations of the formative evaluation will be a critical evaluation method for the summative evaluation.

Each enrolled student user of the course will be invited to participate in a focus group in which they will be able to discuss how well the feedback helped their success in the course. The focus group will be conducted via the Zoom Web conferencing service and will be recorded with the permission of the students. Questions will also ask the students what kinds of feedback methods and resources might be added or modified in order to better facilitate their success (see Appendix D). Focus groups will be used in this situation because the evaluation team feels that the discussion will be more lively and the feedback more forthcoming if the students are able to hear and respond to each others' comments in real time. The data analysis method to be used will be counts and frequencies.

Instructors teaching the English 9A course at the University of Missouri High School will be invited to participate in an interview with the evaluation team regarding their experiences using the feedback model implemented in this course. The evaluation team will utilize the same time they schedule with instructors for the formative evaluation interview, but will ask them a set of summative questions after the formative questions are answered (see Appendix B, Section 2). The summative questions will focus mostly on the instructors' perspective on the feedback model employed in the course and whether or not it might transfer well to other courses on other subjects. They will also be asked about other formats they feel would be effective as well as the training they received regarding the model. The evaluation team will also conduct an interview with the client about the training offered to instructors of the course. The interviews will be conducted via the Zoom web conferencing software. The evaluation team will record the sessions and take notes. Data analysis methods on the collected data will include counts and frequencies.

The methods described above were designed to help address questions generated by the summative evaluation. Table 3 shows the relationship between the questions, the evaluation methods, the data collection instruments and the data analysis methods. When the interviews and the focus group are complete, the evaluation team will transcribe recorded sessions using Rev.com services, which will allow them to analyze the data with greater efficiency and give them a better overall view, which will help facilitate better interpretation.

Summative Evaluation Questions	Evaluation Methods	Data Collection Instruments	Data Analysis Methods
In what ways do the results and recommendations from the formative evaluation inform the anticipated decisions of whether or not this model for feedback should continue to be used for this course?	Analysis of results of formative evaluation	N/A	N/A
Are there other low-cost feedback mechanisms that could be used effectively in this course?	Instructor interview	Interview, pre-written questions	Counts, Frequencies
What elements of the feedback model employed in this course could be effectively used in other courses?	Student Focus Group, Instructor Interview	Pre-written questions, Interview	Counts, Frequencies
In what ways would the feedback model employed in this course need to be modified in order to be effective in other courses?	Student Focus Group, Instructor Interview	Pre-written questions, Interview	Counts, Frequencies
What elements of the training provided for instructors of this course could be effectively used in future training for courses that utilize this feedback model?	Instructor Interview, Interview with client	Pre-written questions, Interview	Counts, Frequencies

Table 3

Logistics (Summative)

Marc Lundstrom will be the evaluation team member in charge of team production. All three members of the team will coordinate the implementation of the summative evaluation plan in different sections. Stephen Solen will distribute and organize data

received from the student focus group. Each individual will be responsible for processing, analyzing, and interpreting data to share with the course manager (Dr. Galyen). Additional details about the logistics are found in the timeline section of this plan including due dates for deliverables.

Timelines (Summative)

The final summative evaluation plan will be reviewed, revised, and approved along with the formative plan by Dr. Moore prior to initiating summative evaluation activities. The data collection phase of the evaluation, beginning with student focus group and the instructor interviews will begin no later than March 28, 2017. Progress reports and collected data will be submitted with the formative evaluation reports starting April 4, 2017, and ending with the final report on May 2, 2017.

Budget (Summative)

Item	Qty	Cost per pc.	Total cost
Personnel time			
Summative planning (hours)	28	45.00	1260.00
Data collection and analysis (hours)	50	45.00	2250.00
Summative Report (hours)	45	45.00	2025.00
Zoom Pro web conferencing subscription (monthly rate)	2	20.00	40.00
Rev.com transcription service (per minute rate)	400	1.25	500.00
Total			6075.00

References

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Appendix A

Student Questionnaire Questions

Please take a few moments to fill out this questionnaire regarding feedback in your English 9A course. This information will be used to help improve feedback and teacher responses to students to help increase student understanding and success in this class.

Please remember that automatic feedback refers to any feedback on assignments or quizzes given to you by the online system. Instructor feedback is personalized feedback from a teacher or TA that is personalized toward your writing assignments, or other assignments that teachers leave a comment for you.

Answer the following questions based on your experience in this class. There is no right or wrong answer, but answer honestly as this is to help the course in the future.

1. I receive feedback on my work right when I need it.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2. The feedback I receive is always correct.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3. The feedback I receive always relates to what I'm working on.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4. I'm satisfied with the automatic feedback the course gives me on my work.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5. I always get plenty of feedback in this course.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7. The feedback I receive helps me do better work.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8. The feedback I receive helps me better understand the course material.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9. I wish automatic feedback were given on more assignments.				

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10. I've always felt supported by my instructor.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11. I always feel like I know how I'm doing in the course.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
12. I have plenty of opportunities to re-work and re-submit my work to improve my understanding.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
12. I would like more optional, ungraded practice activities in the course.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13. What types of feedback would you like to see that you aren't receiving already?				
14. What course activities do you need more feedback on?				
15. How can the feedback you receive in this course be improved?				

Appendix B

Instructor Interview Questions

Section 1 (Formative Evaluation questions)

1. How well does the feedback model implemented in this course, work?
2. Do you feel the automatic feedback given to students is effective?
3. Does the automatic feedback help students achieve the course objectives?
4. Are all instructors implementing the feedback in the same way?
5. Do you feel the feedback is provided in a timely manner for students to utilize effectively?
6. Is there sufficient time to provide personalized feedback to each student?
7. In what areas would you like to see additional feedback provided to the students?
8. Do you feel students receive plenty of feedback in this course?
9. Do students get plenty of opportunity to rework and resubmit assignments?
10. Is the automatic feedback accurate and relevant?
11. How well do you think students feel support from you as they go through the course?
12. Do you feel students are satisfied with the feedback received in this course?
13. In what ways can feedback to students be enhanced?

Section 2 (Summative Evaluation questions)

1. How might you implement a similar feedback model in another course in another subject?
2. In what ways would it be easy to implement in another subject?
3. In what ways would it be difficult to implement in another subject?
4. In what ways would it be **easy for a student** if this kind of feedback were in use in another course?
5. In what ways would it be **difficult for a student** if this kind of feedback were in use in another course?
6. What ideas or suggestions do you have for reducing the amount of time a live instructor needs to spend providing feedback to students?
7. Tell us about the training you received to teach this course.
8. Was the training helpful or relevant?
9. What was the good and the bad about the training?
10. How could the training be improved?

Appendix C

Quality Matters standards that address feedback

3.3 Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of learners' work and are tied to the course grading policy.	Learners are provided with a clear and complete description of the criteria that will be used to evaluate their work and participation in the course. These criteria are stated upfront at the beginning of the course. The description or statement of criteria provides learners with clear guidance on the instructor's expectations and on the required components of coursework and participation. The criteria give learners the information they need to understand how a grade on an assignment or activity will be calculated. As a reviewer, confirm that the criteria used to evaluate learners' performance aligns with the course objectives or competencies. Note, however, that you are not asked to look for and evaluate the instructor's specific feedback to learners in Standard 3.3. Your focus is the design of the course, not the delivery of the course. Examples of what to look for: 1. Evidence that the instructor has stated the criteria for evaluation of all graded work. Criteria may be in the form of a detailed checklist, rubric, or other instrument for identifying the various levels of learner mastery. 2. A description of the how learners' participation in discussions will be graded, including the number of required postings per week; the criteria for evaluating the originality and quality of learners' comments and their responsiveness to classmates' comments; and the grade or credit learners can expect for varying levels of performance
3.5 The course provides learners with multiple opportunities to track their learning progress.	Learning is more effective if learners receive frequent, substantive, and timely feedback. The feedback may come from the instructor directly, from assignments and assessments that have feedback built into them, or even from other learners. Look for examples of self-check quizzes and activities, as well as other types of practice opportunities that provide timely feedback. Such assignments may be voluntary and/or allow multiple attempts. Examples: 1. Writing assignments that allow for the submission of a draft for instructor comment and suggestions for improvement

	2. Self-mastery tests that include informative feedback with each answer choice 3. Interactive games and simulations that have feedback built in 4. Self-scoring practice quizzes 5. Practice written assignments 6. Peer reviews and critiques 7. Model papers or essays provided for learners' viewing 8. Sample answers or answer keys provided for learners' viewing 9. Portfolios with a self-evaluation component, journals, and reflection papers
5.3 The instructor's plan for classroom response time and feedback on assignments is clearly stated.	Frequent feedback from the instructor increases learners' sense of engagement in a course. Learners are better able to manage their course activities when they know upfront when to expect feedback from the instructor. The course provides clear information about when learners will receive instructor responses to emails and discussion postings, feedback on assignments, and grades. This information typically appears in the course syllabus. If it is necessary to alter the response-time standards during the course, the adjustment is clearly communicated to learners. Note to reviewers: You are not evaluating the instructor's plan; you are primarily ensuring the instructor has provided a plan. If you have suggestions for how to improve the plan, you might include them in your recommendations; but the suggestions should not affect your decision about whether the Standard is met. Competency-Based Courses: Interaction with the instructor, facilitator, coach, mentor, or assessor may take different forms. The course introduction indicates the various forms of faculty and staff support available to the learner and explains when learners can expect to receive feedback.

Appendix D

Student Focus Group Questions

1. What's **good** about the feedback in this course?
2. What's **bad** about the feedback in this course?
3. Do you like the automatic feedback?
4. What kinds of feedback or resources might be added (or changed) in order to help you to be more successful?
5. Have you experienced the type and level of feedback you received in this course, in other courses?
6. What would happen if a similar feedback model were used in another course in another subject?
7. In what ways would it be **easy for a student** if this kind of feedback were in use in another course?
8. In what ways would it be **difficult for a student** if this kind of feedback were in use in another course?

Additional questions (optional, if necessary to spur discussion):

9. What types of feedback do you receive most frequently (instructor feedback vs automatic feedback)?
10. In your opinion, which type of feedback do you find most effective to help you learn in an online environment?
11. What do you like/dislike about instructor feedback and why?
12. What do you like/dislike about automated feedback and why?
13. If you could change anything regarding the feedback you receive or don't receive to help you learn more efficiently, what would it be and why?