

## **Guidelines for Responding to Student Writing at the Content Level**

1. Read the text through once without making any marks on it. Resist the temptation to mark the text in any way by putting your pen or pencil away.
2. After reading, identify something the writer has done well.
3. Respond in writing to an idea that has provoked or interested you.
4. Compose a comment (in writing) that might promote revision and move the essay forward. Concentrate on higher-order concerns of ideas, organization, development, and overall clarity as opposed to the lower-order concerns of style, grammar, and mechanics.
5. Instead of marking surface errors in the essay, note at the end of your comment 1 or 2 patterns of error that the writer should attend to as they proofread a final draft. Lower-order concerns are lower not because they are unimportant but because they cannot be efficiently attended to until higher-order concerns have been resolved.