

**NOMINATION PACKET FOR KARIE DAVIS-NOZEMACK**

**CETL CURRICULUM INNOVATION AWARD**

**JANUARY 29, 2016**

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## DESCRIPTION OF ESSAY WIZARD

### THE OBJECTIVE OF ESSAY WIZARD

The purpose of creating and using Essay Wizard is to provide students in MGT 2106, Legal Environment of Business, with more opportunities for analytical writing. Essay Wizard is software that allows students to engage in guided self-editing of their work. By using the software to provide students with guided and pre-written feedback on the content and structure of their essays, an instructor gains significant efficiency and can therefore employ more writing assignments and provide more feedback in a course. This is particularly true for large courses.

### WHY ADD WRITING TO A COURSE THAT DOES NOT REQUIRE IT?

Employers regularly rank communication skills as the most important skill that they seek in graduates. In the Graduate Management Admissions Council's 2014 survey of 600 corporate recruiters from 44 countries, employers ranked written communication skills as the third most important skill they demand from applicants. These recruiters ranked written and oral communication skills as significantly more important than quantitative and qualitative skills. Unfortunately, our students do not always receive frequent opportunities to practice and refine their writing skills outside of required English and Technical Communications courses.

We should not incorporate student writing into our courses merely to improve employment placement quality and rates. We should do it because student writing facilitates learning. Rigorous writing opportunities have a positive effect on student learning, no matter the discipline or content.<sup>1</sup> The existence of such a correlation should not be surprising because "high quality" writing assignments require students to engage in the higher ordered thinking tasks of interpreting, analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating material.<sup>2</sup> Students who engage in these types of writing tasks evidence higher standardized test scores and improved writing proficiency.<sup>3</sup>

### WHY, WITH SIGNIFICANT HELP, DID I CREATE ESSAY WIZARD?

I created Essay Wizard as a more efficient way for my MGT 2106 students to improve their analytical and writing skills. The software allows me to create writing exercises that are scalable for large numbers of students. More specifically, I wanted to provide students with assignments that would challenge their critical thinking, logic, reasoning, and writing skills. Traditional approaches to writing tasks (submission, individual grading and feedback, student revision and resubmission, and regrading and feedback) seemed too resource- and time-intensive for a course with 60 students. I found this particularly true because I sensed that student mastery of analytical writing would require frequent practice. I have taught MGT 2106 for several years at Georgia Tech and another institution. Writing is not an express requirement for the course at either institution. At both institutions, however, I had included an essay question on every exam but received generally low-quality written answers. Because I had assigned exam essay questions without assigning any practice essays prior to the exam, I became concerned that the content and skills that I was teaching were not aligned with the assessment mechanisms I used. I also noticed

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<sup>1</sup> Matsumura, L.C., Garnier, H., Pascal, J., & Valdés, R. (2002). Measuring instructional quality in accountability systems: Classroom assignments and student achievement. *Educational Assessment*, 8(3), 207-229. Newmann, F.M., Bryk, A.S., & Nagaoka, J. (2001). *Authentic intellectual work and standardized tests: Conflict or coexistence*. Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Crosson, A., Matsumura, L.C., Correnti, R., & Arlotta-Guerrero, A. (2012). Writing tasks and students' use of academic language. *Elementary School Journal*, 112(3), 469-496. Matsumura, L.C., Patthey-Chavez, G.G., Valdés, R., Garnier, H. (2002). Teacher feedback, writing assignment quality, and third-grade students' revision in lower- and higher-achieving urban schools. *Elementary School Journal*, 103(1), 3-25.

that the low-quality essays had many similar deficiencies. The general low quality of student writing that I was receiving was consistent with the College's findings that undergraduate student writing was below expectations for a number of our students. The College became aware of undergraduate student writing deficiencies when it collected assessment data in 2013 for AACSB accreditation purposes.

In 2012, I applied to the CETL Teaching Fellows program hoping to find support for building software to facilitate writing. The people of CETL and the Office of Assessment were invaluable in helping Essay Wizard become a reality. Without Donna Llewelyn and Shawn Carnley, in particular, none of this would have been possible. I am also indebted to Brad Campbell, my MBA TA, who has had read every submitted Essay Wizard assignment for sufficiency and completeness during the last two academic years. He has given students a "homework" grade for using Essay Wizard based on whether they have submitted a complete answer and smoothly incorporated all of the feedback provided in the scaffolding questions and follow-up prompts.

#### THE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES OF MGT 2106 APPLYING TO ESSAY WIZARD

I have adopted ten learning objectives for MGT 2106. Of those ten, the course learning objectives applicable to Essay Wizard include the following three:

<b><u>At the end of the course, students should be able to:</u></b>
Predict likely consequences to legal issues deduced from a set of facts describing a business situation
Generate possible solutions and strategies to legal issues
Communicate orally and in writing, in a professional manner and using logic and reasoning, the diagnosis of legal issues, relevant legal theories, and likely consequences

#### How to Use Essay Wizard – Student and Instructor Perspectives

The following is an explanation of how Essay Wizard works from both a student's perspective and an instructor's perspective. Shawn Carnley installed Essay Wizard at [essaywizard.gatech.edu](http://essaywizard.gatech.edu). The website is accessible to anyone with a Georgia Tech log in and password. I would be delighted if committee members accessed the website and tried one of the assignments. Because Essay Wizard does not grade or evaluate answer content itself, it is not necessary for committee members to draft an actual answer to the essay question. Typing anything within the answer field and clicking "submit" will be sufficient to see the scaffolding questions and feedback prompts.

As stated above, Essay Wizard facilitates guided self-editing for student essays. As the first step of Essay Wizard, I create a hypothetical business law scenario. Most of the scenarios that I create are variations of litigated business law disputes. I simplify and vary the facts to adapt them for instructional use. Once, I have created a hypothetical question, I create a rubric that I would normally use to grade a response. I transform the rubric into questions that the students will answer about their essay response. I write and order the questions to create a framework that walks the students through the content and structure of a model answer. I include scaffolding questions about the substantive content as well as analytical structure of the response. I also typically include some reminders about spelling, grammar and punctuation. The final step is to write a follow-up prompt for each question. The follow-up prompts essentially give the student the correct content or other guidance. The follow-up prompts literally deliver content. Each follow-up prompt asks the student to take the information gleaned from the prompt and to revise their essay based on the prompt. This is the critical step. It is the act of closing the loop through

editing that is the most valuable aspects of guided self-editing. Essay Wizard concludes an assignment with a section where I can offer final takeaways or a model answer.

It is important to understand that Essay Wizard does not evaluate or grade content. Human verification of assignment completion and sufficiency is still critical. The value of this intervention to the instructor is that, once an essay question, scaffolding questions, and follow up prompts are created, the assignment may be used by countless students without additional work by the instructor. Essay Wizard requires front end work for the instructor but finds efficiencies by avoiding individualized feedback. The value of this intervention to the student lies in the student engaging in writing practice and editing practice with the help of guidance. It is through guided self-reflection that students should begin to internalize the rubric. The students' Essay Wizard submissions are captured and accessible inside of the Essay Wizard dashboard as well as in a database accessible through Georgia Tech webhosting.

The following is a step-by step pictorial guide for using Essay Wizard from an instructor's perspective and then a student's perspective.

## **INSTRUCTOR'S PERSPECTIVE**

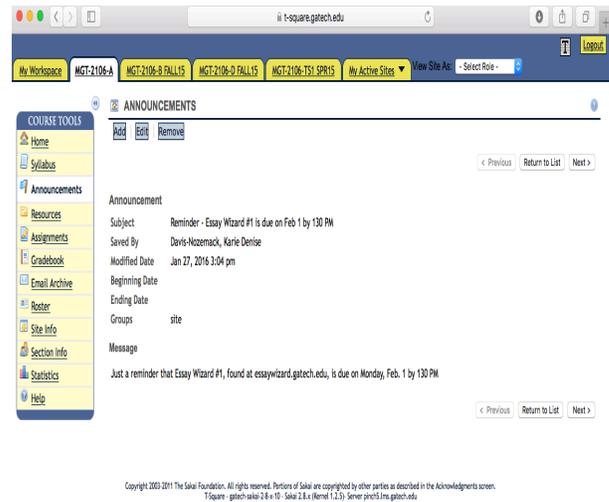
### STEP 1: BUILD ASSIGNMENT

- Dashboard guides you through creation of scaffolding questions. From the CRES Assignments menu, the instructor may choose to view existing assignments or create a new assignment.
- Browse the multidisciplinary question bank or create new questions.
- To create a new question, first, the instructor enters the assignment title and description. Next, the instructor adds the scaffolding questions and corresponding follow-up prompts (to be displayed if the wrong answer to a question is selected). The instructor also indicates the correct answers to the scaffolding questions. Once all of the scaffolding questions have been entered, the final follow-up can be used to summarize the assignment takeaways and/or to display a model response.
- Questions can be tailored to emphasize both discipline specific content and universal writing and rhetoric skills.

The screenshot displays the 'Edit CRES Assignment' interface in the Essay Wizard dashboard. The sidebar on the left contains navigation links for 'About WordPress', 'WordPress.org', 'Documentation', 'Support Forums', 'Feedback', 'Pages', 'Comments', 'CRES Assignments', 'Add New Assignment', 'Responses', 'Settings', 'Import/Export', 'Help', 'Appearance', 'Plugins', 'Users', 'Tools', 'Settings', and 'Collapse menu'. The main content area shows the assignment title 'Essay Wizard 1. Due Monday, February 1, 2016 by 130 PM', a permalink, and a rich text editor with a sample paragraph about Paradise Resort, Inc. Below the editor, there are two scaffolding questions with follow-up prompts and answer options (No/Yes) and a 'Remove Question' button.

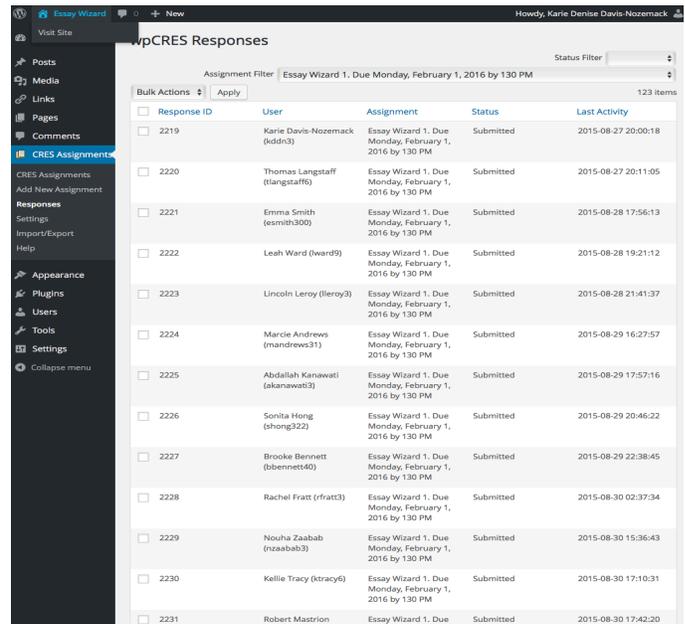
## STEP 2: DISSEMINATE TO STUDENTS

- Scalable design means an assignment can be completed by innumerable students with no addition to instructor workload.
- Students log in using their GT user names and passwords.



## STEP 3: DOWNLOAD RESPONSES

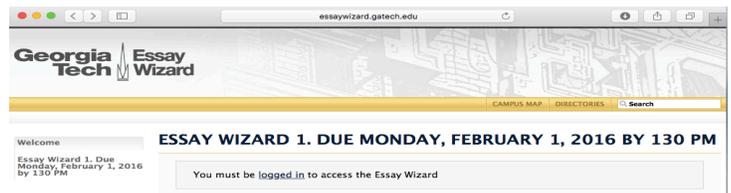
- View students' progress through various steps of a single assignment.
- Track students' progress over the course of the semester.
- Because students have self-edited according to the customized rubric, further grading is optional.



## STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

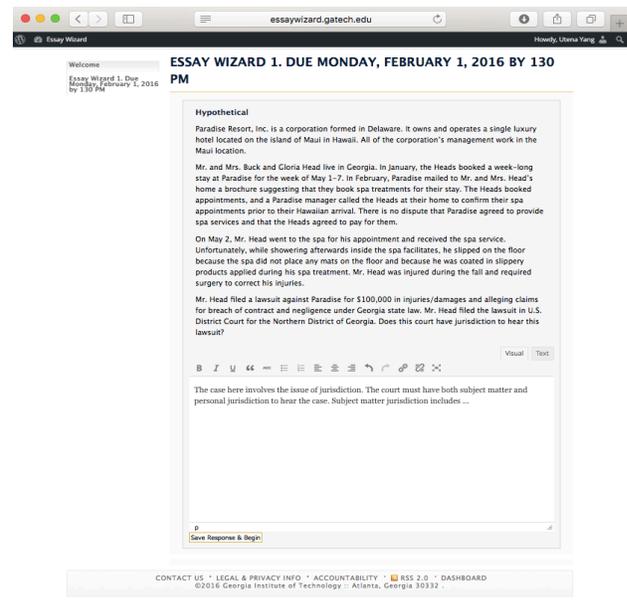
### STEP 1: LOG IN

- Universal access can be password-protected or left unsecured. Essay Wizard is integrated with the school's Sakai-based course-management system. Students can log in using their school usernames and passwords.

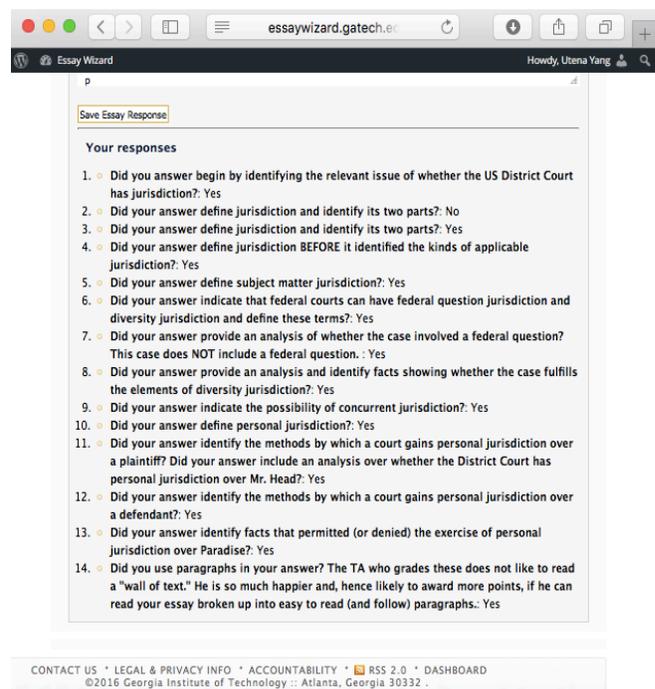


## STEP 2: ESSAY SUBMISSION

- Once logged in, the student selects the applicable assignment and answers the essay question.
- The scaffolding questions lead the student through the self-editing process. The student's response is displayed below for quick reference and editing.
- If the student selects the incorrect response to the scaffolding question, the follow-up prompt is displayed, serving to guide the student through correcting his/her written response.



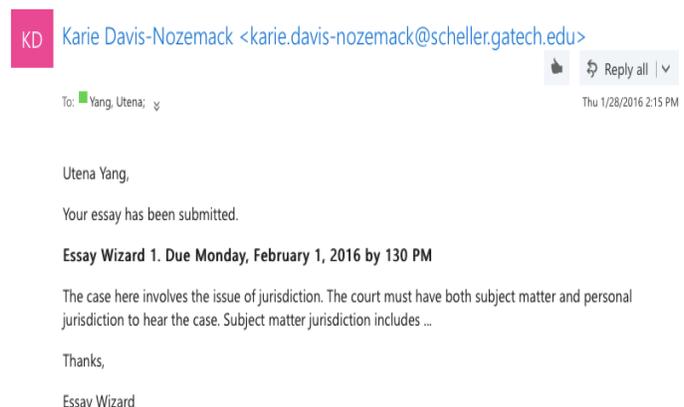
- The summary of scaffolding questions and responses allows students to reference the preceding questions and provides assurance that each aspect of the assignment has been completed according to the instructor's rubric.
- After all of the scaffolding questions have been correctly answered, a final follow-up is displayed to summarize the requirements of the assignment and/or present a model response.



## STEP 3: CONFIRMATION EMAIL

- The student receives an email confirmation of the assignment submission complete with a copy of the submitted response.

### [Essay Wizard] Essay Submitted



## EVALUATION OF ESSAY WIZARD

I have used Essay Wizard during 5 semesters in a total of 10 courses with 499 students. Below is a chart indicating the semesters, courses, and enrollment for which I have used Essay Wizard.

Semester/Year	Course No.	Course Title	Enrollment
Fall 2015	MGT 2106	Legal Aspects of Business	57
Fall 2015	MGT 2106	Legal Aspects of Business	56
Spring 2015	MGT 2106	Legal Aspects of Business	58
Fall 2014	MGT 2106	Legal Aspects of Business	54
Fall 2014	MGT 2106	Legal Aspects of Business	49
Spring 2014	MGT 2106	Legal Aspects of Business	55
Spring 2014	MGT 2106	Legal Aspects of Business	47
Spring 2014	MGT 2106	Legal Aspects of Business	52
Spring 2013	MGT 2106	Legal Aspects of Business	43
Spring 2013	MGT 2106	Legal Aspects of Business	28

I measured Essay Wizard's effectiveness for MGT 2106 students in three ways. First, the Office of Assessment conducted an anonymous survey of students in two sections of MGT 2106 at the end of spring 2013, which was the first semester I used the software. Of the 81 students in my courses who used Essay Wizard, 36 responded to the survey. Those who did respond were positive about the effects of the software on their writing abilities. Respondents overwhelmingly agreed or strongly agreed that, as a result of using Essay Wizard, they were confident in their ability to "clearly convey their thoughts in writing" (88.9%) and "effectively convey an argument in writing" (83.3%). Respondents also agreed or strongly agreed that the use of Essay Wizard strengthened their writing by improving their organization (94.3%), attention to detail (91.7%), analysis (86.1%), editing (86.1%), logic (86.1%), clarity (77.1%), conciseness (77.1%), flow (75.0%), and technical writing (75.0%). Admittedly, the sample size is small given the total number of students who have experience with the software, but these survey responses suggest that Essay Wizard is promising as a helpful intervention.

Most interestingly, the survey data shows that, as an intervention, Essay Wizard appears to help those who need it most. Students earning a "B" or "C" (90.5%) as a final grade in the course were significantly more likely than students earning an "A" (53.3%) to say that Essay Wizard improved their technical writing. Nonbusiness students (93.3%) were much more likely than business students (61.9%) to say that Essay Wizard improved the flow of their writing. Freshman and sophomores (96.2%) were significantly more likely than juniors and seniors (60.0%) to agree that Essay Wizard improved their editing. The survey also provided some constructive criticism of the software. Most frequently mentioned were desires for a smoother interface and automatic saving.

Using the Essay Wizard has strengthened my writing in this class by improving my:	Percentage of Respondents Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing	Ease of use and applicability of the Essay Wizard	Percentage of Respondents Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing
Organization	94.3	The Essay Wizard is applicable to the writing assignments in this course	94.4
Attention to detail	91.7	The Essay Wizard could be modified to be applicable in other courses	91.7
Analysis	86.1	The Essay Wizard is easy to use	86.1
Editing	86.1		
Logic	86.1		
Clarity	77.1		
Conciseness	7.1		
Flow	75		
Technical writing	75		
Vocabulary	71.4		
Research	58.8		
Speed/efficiency	57.1		
Style	54.3		
Creativity	40		
Grammar/punctuation	37.1		
Citations	27.3		
		As a result of using the Essay Wizard I am confident in my ability to:	Percentage Of Respondents Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing
		Clearly convey my thoughts in writing	88.9
		Effectively convey an argument in writing	83.3

I also compiled all of the CIOS comments related to “writing,” “essays,” and “Essay Wizard” for spring 2013, spring 2014, fall 2014, spring 2015, and fall 2015. During these 5 semesters, I received 98 separate comments related to these words. The large number of specific comments revealed some commonalities. Students appear to appreciate the high volume, low value (grade-value) that the Essay Wizard practice provided. There were 19 separate CIOS comments asking for more than the 6 or 7 required Essay Wizard assignments. These CIOS comments are consistent with the requests for more assignments that I personally received from students with weaker writing skills. Some of the CIOS comments were critical of Essay Wizard. Much criticism centered around wanting more feedback than Essay Wizard provided. This is perhaps a signal as to the desirability of receiving feedback on one’s writing. There was also criticism related to the online format and differences in grading standards applied to Essay Wizard assignments and exam essays. The TA graded Essay Wizard submissions solely for whether there was complete integration of all of the feedback from the scaffolding questions and prompts. The scale was 100/75/50/0. In that sense, Essay Wizard assignment grades could be viewed as a proxy for successful use of the intervention. Higher grades on Essay Wizard assignments would indicate more thorough usage of the intervention. Exam essays were graded according to a more specific rubric aligning with the course learning objectives. Please note that the scaffolding questions and follow-up prompts in Essay Wizard mirrored the exam essay rubrics. Some representative CIOS feedback is included below.

Semester	CIOS Comment
Fall 2015	The Essay Wizards helped me learn complicated concepts thoroughly, but I appreciate that they were weighted in a way to not be stressful.
Fall 2015	I think the best aspect of this course was the essay wizards. Every time I was assigned an essay wizard, it would force me to review the material and write an essay about it. They are very helpful for reviewing!
Fall 2015	Essay wizards were great--I didn't enjoy them but they rly forced us to learn and prepared us for tests. Loved how there wasn't routine homework--allowed us to study effectively on our own.
Fall 2015	more review/feedback on essay wizards would be helpful so we would know if we need improving before writing the essays on the test.
Spring 2015	I think that the essay wizards were a really good way for me to check my understanding over the topics.
Fall 2014	more frequent essay wizards since the essays are a significant portion of the tests and the essay wizards are the best way to practice.
Fall 2014	The essay wizards were very helpful in understanding and applying the knowledge in real applications. This is definitely a great method of learning the material.
Fall 2014	Essaywizard was great because it gave instant feedback on the essay and helped you figure out what was expected on the exam.
Spring 2014	Great course. Loved the essay wizards. Wish we had a few more, or other forms of homework, after the second exam.
Spring 2014	Essay Wizard is a good tool. I liked it because it made me research the topics more, preparing me for the exams.
Spring 2014	Essay wizards were a huge help in this course. Although the technology could be a pain in the butt, they helped me identify all the different aspects of a problem, instead of looking only on the surface.
Spring 2014	Essay Wizard is a helpful instrument in this class. I think it would be useful in other classes. The fact that it guides you toward the best answer, is very helpful.
Spring 2014	I thought EW was pretty good. I mean it walked you through the question, which made it pretty easy and good to study for the exams.
Spring 2014	I really liked the instant feedback given by EssayWizard. It really improved my essay writing skills.
Spring 2014	I think essay wizards actually really helped me the most. It made me actually think out the whole process of writing a quality essay. I think we should have done more towards the end of the year in essay wizard.
Spring 2014	The in-class activities and Essay Wizard really nailed down my understanding of the material. Doing the essay wizard assignments forced me to actually read the book and think about the concepts.
Spring 2014	The essay wizards were very helpful because they served as a guide for the content and structure expected on the exams. They were also a valuable study tool by helping me connect the concepts and make sure I had those connections correct.
Spring 2014	I loved the essay wizard homeworks because they gave you an outlet to actually take the knowledge you learned and express it through your case reflection.
Spring 2014	It would be very beneficial to get feedback on our essaywizards. The program itself was VERY helpful but to know what we did wrong and right.

Finally, I used grades from courses in fall 2015, spring 2015, and fall 2014 in an attempt to assess effectiveness. I have IRB approval to assess Essay Wizard and have consent forms on file. There appears to be a correlation between successful use of Essay Wizard (average of Essay Wizard

assignment grades) and final course grades. Homework was a relatively small percentage of students' final grades, with the vast majority of their final grades coming from three exams and class participation. It is entirely possible that this data only validates the idea that those who do their homework are more likely to do well in the course, but the survey and CIOS comments suggest that Essay Wizard may be more helpful than just mere homework.

I also looked at the relationship between successful use of Essay Wizard and performance on exams and exam essays. In some semesters, there appears to be a correlation between successful use of Essay Wizard and exam essay grades as well as exam grades. These statistical results are not entirely consistent amongst the five separate sections, however. Four of the sections showed greater significance in the three measurements. One section in Fall 2014 only validated a relationship between Essay Wizard and final course grade.

Semester	N	Relationship Between Essay Wizard Average Grades (X) and Exam Essays Average (20 pt scale) (Y)			Relationship Between Essay Wizard Average Grades (X) and Final Course Grade (100 pt scale) (Y)			Relationship Between Essay Wizard Average Grades (X) and Exam Average (100 pt scale) (Y)		
		Multiple R	X Variable Coeff	X Variable t stat	Multiple R	X Variable Coeff	X Variable t stat	Multiple R	X Variable Coeff	X Variable t stat
Fall 2015, D	51	0.47	0.10	3.77	0.64	0.39	5.87	0.53	0.09	4.47
Fall 2015, B	54	0.36	0.08	2.79	0.63	0.36	5.98	0.35	0.21	2.75
Spring 2015	53	0.55	0.12	4.76	0.78	0.36	8.95	0.58	0.31	5.16
Fall 2014, B	54	0.40	0.13	3.20	0.68	0.46	6.76	0.51	0.45	4.28
Fall 2014, D	48	0.28	0.04	1.98	0.60	0.20	5.21	0.12	0.04	0.85
Fall 2014 to Fall 2015	260	0.36	0.08	6.30	0.63	0.31	13.1	0.33	0.19	5.79

The effectiveness measures that I collected reinforce my commitment to continuing to assign “high quality” writing assignments to my students and to rely on Essay Wizard as a vehicle for providing feedback. The effectiveness measures mirror the higher quality exam essays that I have received since adopting Essay Wizard. That said, these effectiveness measures suggest a variety of ways that I could improve the software, its integration in the class, and the student experience in general.

### POTENTIAL FOR OTHERS TO ADOPT OR ADAPT ESSAY WIZARD

The architecture of Essay Wizard is free and available to anyone through internet download. Shawn Carnley of the Office of Assessment coded Essay Wizard as an open-source WordPress plugin, and he listed it in the public WordPress plugin directory. He has pushed out updates through the directory. Essay Wizard can be installed on any webpage. It can be open access or login and password protected, as it is here at Georgia Tech. It can also link to course management software. To support myself and others' use of the software, I created banks of rubric questions and follow-up prompts for legal content, ethics content, and general writing competencies.

While I have used Essay Wizard to add essay assignments to my course, it could be used for other purposes. Because it is architecture for scaffolding questions and feedback and devoid of discipline-specific content, it could be used as a self-reflective guide for other activities such as group projects or oral presentations. I hope that we will include additional functionality to Essay Wizard in the future; I think that a peer-review function would be particularly helpful.

**Georgia Tech**  **Ernest Scheller Jr.  
College of Business**

January 28, 2016

Dear Georgia Tech Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning:

The Scheller College of Business is pleased to nominate Assistant Professor Karie Davis-Nozemack for the Curriculum Innovation Award. Professor Davis-Nozemack created open-source software for the purpose of adding writing exercises to large sections of MGT 2106, Legal Environment of Business. This is particularly commendable because writing is not expressly mandatory for teaching MGT 2106; she added writing to the course on her own initiative.

Professor Davis-Nozemack has used creativity and technology to provide a more rigorous learning experience for her students. With assistance, she created Essay Wizard, which is open-source software that facilitates self-edited student writing. She uses the software to provide writing exercises to students in her courses. Within Essay Wizard, students answer an essay question and then the software presents a series of scaffolding questions to guide students through Professor Davis-Nozemack's rubric. If the students answer the scaffolding questions incorrectly, the software provides Professor Davis-Nozemack's pre-written feedback. Students use the feedback to edit and improve their essay. The design requires students to engage in self-reflection on the content and writing quality of their essays. By asking students to evaluate their own writing and then incorporate the software's feedback into their answers, students have the opportunity to internalize her rubric and edit their writing to ensure that the learning loop can be closed.

Professor Davis-Nozemack created this software with the help of Shawn Carnley of Georgia Tech's Office of Assessment. Shawn coded the software so that it could be adapted to a variety of uses, updated easily, and widely available. It is a Wordpress Plugin that allows anyone to add their own essay questions, scaffolding questions, and responsive feedback. The plugin is the architecture on which content can be imposed. Once the Plugin is downloaded from the WordPress Plugin Directory, the software allows anyone to build custom assignments with their own scaffolding questions and feedback.

For the last three years, Professor Davis-Nozemack has taught 3 of the 9 sections of MGT 2106 that the College offers. She used the software in the course during spring 2013, spring 2014, fall 2014, spring 2015, and fall 2015. These 5 semesters included over 500 students in 10 sections of this required business course. Students in her course write approximately 20 pages. Using the software and exam essays, Professor Davis-Nozemack has provided feedback to her students on the nearly 10,000 pages of submitted written analysis since spring 2013.

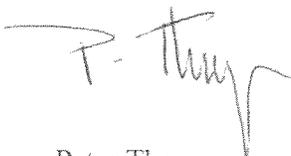
Professor Davis-Nozemack has measured the impact of the software, and the results look promising. Her analysis indicates that successful use of the software to practice writing and incorporate feedback correlates with higher exam essay grades and higher course grades. The empirical findings are consistent with reports from the students via survey and via CIOS teaching evaluations. Students acknowledge that Essay Wizard offers the opportunity to improve their writing, and they respond favorably to it. Professor Davis-Nozemack reports that students with weaker writing skills have requested more writing exercises because they appreciated the feedback on their writing.

This creation of the software is an example of Professor Davis-Nozemack's commitment to teaching. Professor Davis-Nozemack has received outstanding teaching effectiveness marks in every course she has taught at Georgia Tech. Her teaching effectiveness scores, from both large and small courses, are 4.8, 4.9, and 5.0. These scores include sections in which she used the software. Professor Davis-Nozemack received the Brady Family Award for Teaching Excellence from the College of Business and has twice received 2013 Class of 1940 Course Survey Teaching Effectiveness Awards. In addition, the business undergraduate students voted her Professor of the Year for Core Courses last year.

In addition to teaching, Professor Davis-Nozemack is also dedicated to her research. She is well published in the area of business law and ethics. She has placed 5 articles in outstanding outlets, and her research has affected US tax policy. She has been recognized as an Outstanding Proceedings Reviewer and was invited to be a staff editor for the American Business Law Journal. Professor Davis-Nozemack has also contributed invaluable service to the College during the last three years through her work on the College of Business undergraduate education committee.

In conclusion, the Scheller College of Business commends Professor Davis-Nozemack's innovative creation and use of technology in MGT 2106 and highly recommends her work for recognition.

Sincerely,



Peter Thompson  
Senior Associate Dean for Faculty and Research  
Scheller College of Business  
Georgia Institute of Technology  
800 West Peachtree Street NW  
Atlanta, GA 30308  
Email: Peter.Thompson@scheller.gatech.edu

January 27, 2016

Dear Awards Committee,

I am delighted to write this recommendation letter on behalf of Karie Davis-Nozemack. Karie has developed innovative software that has significantly improved Scheller's undergraduate business curriculum. She is very deserving of this award.

When I stepped into the role of Associate Dean for Scheller's Undergraduate Program in 2012, I was surprised by the poor writing skills of our students. Assessment results conducted in Spring 2013, for example, indicated that 50% of students were below expectations on at least one dimension of effective written communication. This is a significant problem, because employers seek students with well-developed communication skills.

Karie developed an ingenious solution to improve the writing skills of Scheller students. Working with Shawn Carnley in the office of assessment, Karie developed a software package called Essay Wizard ([essaywizard.gatech.edu](http://essaywizard.gatech.edu)). The software prompts students to draft a responsive essay and then answer a series of questions about their essay. The questions are about the actual content as well as structure and argument of the essay. If they answer the questions incorrectly, the software provides them guidance about the correct content/structure and asks them to edit their essay based on the guidance. They submit the essay after they have edited it based on the guidance of the software.

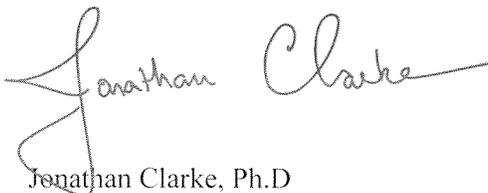
The software has been used since Spring 2013 and the results have been impressive. Written communication skills were reassessed again in Spring 2015. This time only 18% of students scored below expectations. This is a significant improvement in a short period of time.

The software is open source and is available for download as a free Wordpress plugin. I'm hoping the software will be implemented in other courses within Scheller.

It's worth noting that Karie is also one of the very best teachers in the Scheller College of Business. At the Institute level, she has twice won the Class of 1940 CIOS award. Within the Scheller College of Business, Karie has won the Brady Award for Teaching Excellence and won the award for best undergraduate core class.

I hope you will give Karie strong consideration for this award. Please let me know if I can provide any additional information.

Best regards,



Jonathan Clarke, Ph.D  
Associate Professor of Finance  
Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs  
Scheller College of Business

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a second year full-time MBA graduate student at GA Tech and have had the pleasure of working with Professor Karie Davis-Nozemack as the teaching assistant within her undergraduate course, *The Legal Environment of Business*. Before attending graduate school, I worked in the financial services, wealth management and medical recruiting fields with over 11 years of sales and relationship management experience. During this time, I developed strong analytical skills with a focus on negotiations, persuasion and the communication of complex ideas into actionable recommendations for clients. These skills have helped me in my work with Professor Nozemack by allowing me to help her implement a new teaching program geared towards improving student's analytical process.

Upon meeting the Professor, I was impressed with her high level of energy and passion around teaching. She has a rare combination of drive and creativity that inspires others to reach outside of their comfort zones and try something new. This drive led to the creation of a new teaching tool called *Essay Wizard* that is intended to help students develop their persuasive writing skills, and more importantly, develop cogent arguments that follow a logical framework. While this framework is geared towards analyzing legal cases, its implications extend much further. The core concept behind the *Essay Wizard* tool is the idea that most successful arguments require a thoughtful combination of subject knowledge, facts and supporting evidence before concluding with an informed opinion-based summary.

My role as graduate assistant involved grading the *Essay Wizard* assignments and providing feedback when necessary. Over the last three terms I have graded roughly 4,200 pages of essays from 300+ students. This broad sampling of written material has allowed me to develop some detailed observations, and I have taken note of several distinct trends over the last three semesters that indicate the success of the program. The most obvious trend centers around the students' transition from unstructured, and sometimes chaotic expositions, to thoughtful well structured arguments. In the early stages of each semester I have noticed that even the most competent writers will fill their essays with unnecessary information and fail to align their arguments with subject knowledge or supporting evidence. As the semester progresses, the students evolve by incorporating Professor Nozemack's guided prompts to isolate the key elements of each case, defining legal terms and then linking them with supporting evidence. Essays gradually become more concise and easier to comprehend as unnecessary information is omitted. This process allows the students to explore their own analytical style while having a baseline template to serve as a guidepost.

During exams, the students do not have the aid of prompts and are forced to apply the principles they have learned in order to develop their argument. This provides us with a baseline for observing their progress and the overall effectiveness of the *Essay Wizard* tool. I have observed that the tool succeeds in giving them a go-to method for attacking each essay question and focuses their efforts on relevant information.

In the future, this methodology will help the students in any situation where they are tasked with solving a multi-variable problem lacking a straightforward answer. I feel that this program is highly beneficial for developing students' analytical problem solving and would like to see it incorporated more broadly within the university. That being said, I would like to recommend Professor Nozemack for a teaching award and bring as much attention as possible to this program.

Thank you,

Brad Campbell  
MBA candidate  
Scheller School of Business  
Georgia Tech ID: 901248033

To Whom It May Concern:

January 25, 2016

It is an absolute honor to be able to write in support of Karie Davis-Nozemack's application for the Curriculum Innovation Award. Her class, Management 2106, exposed me to new ways of learning and consistently challenged me to think critically in terms of a strategic businessperson, and for that I strongly believe she should be recognized.

When I first enrolled in Karie Davis-Nozemack's Legal Aspects of Business course, I had little knowledge of the legalities behind most business encounters. However, I did consider myself to be a good writer as I had experience in AP English courses and writing for a newspaper staff in high school. To be frank, what I expected from the course was consistent reading assignments and exams that tested me on terms associated with business legalities. However, thanks to Professor Nozemack's innovative take on Management 2106, I saw a tremendous increase in not only my critical thinking abilities, but also in my writing skills.

Unlike in my other reading-heavy courses, in Management 2106 I was challenged to apply terms and concepts to real life situations. In order to effectively make her students think in terms of a strategic businessperson, Professor Nozemack created EssayWizard, a perfect complement to the course's assigned readings. EssayWizard is an online program that presents students with applicable scenarios and challenges them to come to a legal conclusion to that presented situation. First, students are asked to think through the scenario and answer the prompt to the best of their ability. Then, the software challenges the student by asking step-by-step, thought-provoking questions in order to make sure that the student considered all aspects of the presented problem. This software's thought-provoking ability was a new concept that I found incredibly useful in a course that often presented a problem that had multiple possible answers. This software is a perfect complement to the course material. As a student, I loved the fact that I could walk into class one day and discuss material, then go home actually try to apply it to a situation using EssayWizard.

I wanted from this course a curriculum that not only challenged me, but also engaged me and allowed me to think in terms of multiple types of people within a corporate structure. Professor Nozemack's EssayWizard challenged me at times to think like a student, a manufacturer, and even a CEO. By implementing this program, Professor Nozemack encourages students to approach problems from multiple stances, and thus gain a greater understanding of the multitude of aspects of business transactions. Oftentimes, there were multiple possible answers to EssayWizard's prompts. I found these prompts to be the most fun as they often prompted in class discussions afterwards. This style of teaching allows students to understand that not every legal situation has a clean-cut answer. Through her teaching style complemented with her implementation of EssayWizard, Nozemack consistently challenges students to think critically.

After being exposed to Professor Nozemack's teaching style, I constantly seek professors who are as creative, passionate, and engaged as she was during my time in Management 2106. This course, and specifically the use of EssayWizard, was a refreshing take on material that could easily be taught via lecture.

Because of my positive experience in her course, I strongly recommend Karie Davis-Nozemack for the Curriculum Innovation Award. Please contact me if you have any questions regarding my experience.

Best regards,



**Sara Beagle**

Scheller College of Business, 2018

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am proud and honored to be able to write a letter of support for Professor Karie Davis-Nozemack for the Curriculum Innovation Award. Professor Nozemack is incredibly unique not only in her ability to create new ways for her students to learn course material, but also grow as individuals and be challenged to think critically.

One of the ways that Professor Nozemack's course was a unique and effective learning experience was due to the use of EssayWizard. Essay Wizard is a tool professor Nozemack created for students to apply and test their knowledge throughout the semester. With this tool students respond to a prompt about a legal topic, pulling information we learned from readings and class discussions and apply it to real life situations, provoking us to think critically about the topics and issues at hand. After the first draft of a response is created, the program prompts students with questions about the manner in which they answered the question as well as specific topics that should have been addressed. Essay Wizard provides students with a logical skeleton of the essay, however, the student must utilize critical thinking to fill in the details and reasoning behind their answer. The unique style of software gave us a perfect balance of prompting students to think about the question more in depth while also encouraging the student to think independently. For me personally, Essay Wizard drastically improved my writing style as I was able to understand how to effectively formulate a concise response while obtaining immediate feedback. This critiquing style allowed me to self-evaluate my response throughout the various steps in the writing process.

I believe that Essay Wizard worked seamlessly in conjunction with the classroom learning environment to make a course where students did not simply memorize material, but one where students owned the material and were able to critically think about and apply topics to real life situations. It was expected that students came to class prepared to speak and discuss the topics on hand and to ask any questions that could arise from possible discrepancies in the law. The foundation of knowledge was then used to apply legal issues to real life situations moving students into the highest taxonomy of learning. The classroom environment was unique; it allowed students to not only ask difficult questions, but also think on their own outside of the classroom, with much greater depth, through the use of EssayWizard.

Professor Nozemack teaches such a thought-proving course because of her depth of knowledge and enthusiasm for the course material as well as patience when explaining a concept that a student does not understand. The innovative use of essay wizard as well as thought-provoking, interactive classroom discussions is a refreshing take on course material that could easily be taught in a lecture-only setting. I believe that professor Nozemack embodies a passion of teaching and love of her subject area that is unparalleled and her class was a phenomenal learning experience for me. She is a professor that truly does care about each and every one of her students inside and out of the classroom. She sets a high standard at the Scheller College of Business and I feel that other professors should strive to follow her example.

It is because of Professor Nozemack's passion for her course material, and individualized, creative course style, and my great experience in the course that I would highly recommend Professor Karie Davis-Nozemack for the Curriculum Innovation Award.

Best,



Sam Medinger  
Scheller College of Business 2018  
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To Whom It May Concern:

January 20, 2016

It is my honor and pleasure to write this letter on behalf of Professor Karie Davis-Nozemack in support of her application for the Curriculum Innovation Award. As an undergraduate student in her Legal Aspects of Business course during spring of 2015, it took virtually no time to discover that Prof. Davis-Nozemack's class - largely through the implementation of her software resource, Essay Wizard - was going to be a positively unique experience. Through Essay Wizard, Prof. Davis-Nozemack was able to ceaselessly demonstrate the importance of critical thinking and knowledge application, and she ultimately facilitated an exceptional learning experience.

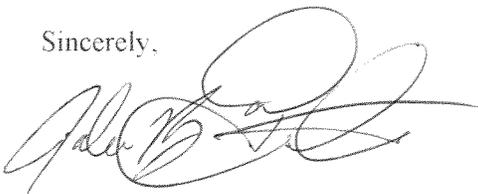
In many fields, but especially when regarding business law, there are few skills more essential to develop and apply than critical thinking. The students in the Legal Aspects of Business course were given weekly hypothetical scenarios via Essay Wizard in which they would analyze facts, evaluate the law in the stated circumstances, and then draw educated conclusions. Essay Wizard subsequently would prompt the students according to their analyses of the case and guide them in their reasoning with detailed explanations of each aspect of the case, which helped students think critically and understand underlying concepts.

Moreover, Essay Wizard served as an invaluable asset to the course by integrating seamlessly into the standard coursework, making hands-on application a requirement for success in the class. Prof. Davis-Nozemack ensured that all students independently used Essay Wizard in order to apply what they learned in lecture towards case studies. This proved to be remarkably beneficial in that it encouraged students to fundamentally understand all aspects of the course material as opposed to merely memorizing content during exam preparation. Students were therefore incentivized to work diligently in making what they had learned applicable in real-world settings.

Finally, the factor that, alongside the implementation of Essay Wizard, evoked such a phenomenally effective class experience was the quality of the teaching conducted by Prof. Davis-Nozemack. The course mandated individual excellence and application, and exhibition of student effort and betterment did not go without recognition. Arguably most important was Prof. Davis-Nozemack's insistence on helping students excel and genuinely understand course material. Her efforts towards using innovative technology to make the course and the overall class experience engaging, rewarding, and highly informative are not frequently observed in typical college settings, and her performance as an educator and leader among students are exceptionally commendable. Prof. Davis-Nozemack's use of Essay Wizard was a fantastic means for challenging her students and making the class enjoyable, and her caliber of teaching deserves to be regarded in the highest degree.

I strongly recommend, without reservation, Prof. Davis-Nozemack for the Curriculum Innovation Award, and I therefore appreciate any favorable consideration given to her application. Please feel free to contact me with any questions regarding my experience in Prof. Davis-Nozemack's class.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Foster', written in a cursive style.

John Foster  
BSBA, 2018  
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