The RooWriter is a directed self-placement assessment designed to provide a UMKC undergraduate student with direct information on her/his current ability to use academic reading and writing to engage in the critical analysis of discourse. In taking the RooWriter, a student writes a "documented, critical essay" about a topic based on a Reading Packet of articles selected from among several choices of packets provided by the RooWriter staff, or other faculty. The criteria for assessing student performance on the RooWriter are based on the criteria used to assess student reading, writing, and discourse analysis in the new 30-hour University-wide General Education Program.

The RooWriter is offered online at any time and place a student has access to the Internet. Once begun, a student has 72 hours to type and submit a RooWriter essay. However, rather than a grade (such as pass/fail) being assigned to the essay, a comprehensive critical assessment of the student's essay will be composed by RooWriter Evaluators and provided to the student. Certain Colleges, Schools, Departments, Majors, Writing Intensive courses, etc. may also require additional RooWriter assessments, and some might further require a certain minimal level of achievement be attained for advancement. Completion and submission of at least one RooWriter essay is a mandatory UMKC graduation requirement, but a student may take the RooWriter as many times as desired during her/his career at UMKC in order to get a current assessment of her/his ability to use academic reading and writing to engage in critical discourse analysis.

A draft of the RooWriter website can be viewed at: http://dev.umkc.edu/roowriter/index.cfm

**RooWriter Advantages in Replacing the WEPT**

**Advantages for Students**

- Take online at any time on any computer over the Internet
- Typed with a word processor over 72 hours, rather than handwritten in a bluebook over a single 3 hour period
- Choice to write about a *free* discipline-specific Reading Packet of articles on a subject of interest to you
- Receive a copy of your essay, as well as critical feedback on your writing in a formative, diagnostic report
- Can take more than once in your UMKC career, and before graduation, for a current assessment of your writing

**Advantages for Faculty**

- A campus-wide initiative to encourage improved student reading and writing
- Access to these essays and Essay Evaluations for your own students
- Opportunity to compose a Reading Packet + citation format for a specific discipline or School
- Opportunity to work (if desired) as an Evaluator strictly for essays on certain discipline-specific Reading Packets

**Advantages for Schools, the College, and UMKC**

- Retention of students by providing personal, targeted, useful writing assistance repeatedly
- Students see this as helpful and worthwhile, not just an administrative obstacle to graduation
- An online writing assessment which can support online courses
- Essay Evaluation criteria coincide with those for the new UMKC-wide General Education Program
- Rich writing assessment data (PDF essays, Essay Evaluations) other than just Pass/Fail grades