**Title** (20 words)

Looking at the Way Forward in the Authentic Assessment of Academic Writing

**Summary** (50 words)

This roundtable discussion provides a structured forum for participants interested in writing assessment to advance their understanding of important issues in the authentic assessment of academic writing including the purpose, the writer, the writing task, the scoring, the reader, and test validation.

**Keywords** (3)

Authentic assessment, multi-trait scoring, disciplinary writing

**Graduate Student Status**: No

**Abstract (300 words)**

In an academic context, test authenticity refers to the extent to which a test measures the types of skills and abilities that are considered necessary for academic study in a particular context. From this perspective, authentic assessment can only be done locally, where the specific writing context—including the purpose, audience, and the range of tasks—is known. Over the past several years, we have been engaged in the development of an authentic test designed to measure the academic writing ability of international students at a graduate institute in Japan and have moved from the use of a commercial general-purpose writing test scored holistically to the development of a more specific, locally-designed test that elicits “text-responsible prose” (Leki & Carson, 1997, p. 58), assesses what is valued in disciplinary writing, and focuses on multiple traits of writing that are important at the graduate level. The purpose of this roundtable discussion is to provide a structured forum for participants interested in writing assessment to advance their understanding of important issues in authentic assessment and to facilitate collaboration in the development of authentic tests of academic writing. Drawing on the work being done at our institute, we will initiate a discussion of six broad components of an authentic writing test: the purpose, the writer, the writing task, the scoring, the reader, and test validation. Participants will be encouraged to share ideas about, and experiences with, writing assessment and test development. The discussion is expected to broaden participants’ understanding of authentic writing assessment and the challenges involved in the development of authentic tests of academic writing.

Reference

Leki, I., & Carson, J. (1997). “Completely different words”: EAP and the writing experiences of ESL students in university courses. *TESOL Quarterly, 31*, 39-69.