Effective Conferences
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I. Types of Conferences
- Pre-draft drop-in
- Pre-draft formal
- Interim draft formal
- Post-mortem
- Optional v. mandatory

II. Timing Considerations
- Length of conference
- Return paper in time to allow student review before conference
- Keep an eye on the next due date when scheduling/allowing conferences

III. Teacher preparation for the conference
- Effective critique
- Final comment provides agenda
- On-the-spot review
- Other

IV. Student preparation for the conference
- Review of critique
- Self-critique
- Assigned preparation

V. The conference itself
- Establish an appropriate environment
- Phases of the conference (Wellford-Slocum)
  - Build rapport
  - Provide an overview of the problem(s) to be discussed (student and/or teacher)
  - Work toward resolving the problem(s)
  - Provide closure
- Communicate effectively
- Encourage student participation and note-taking
- Follow an agenda as needed

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1With thanks to Lorraine Bannai, who shared a PowerPoint prepared by herself and Connie Krontz, both of Seattle University School of Law.
VI. Strategies for addressing the problems (Bannai & Kroontz)
Reader-based reactions
Quasi-Socratic
“Link back” to what the student knows
Work on a section to illustrate a point
Validate what the student has done well

VII. Challenges
Not just a river in Egypt: students who deny that there is a problem
Students who have learned English as a second language
Students with learning disabilities or other academic difficulties
Students with personal problems

VIII. Ending the Conference
Staying on schedule
Addressing the future
Bibliography


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Jessica E. Price, Teaching Students About the Legal Reader: The Reader Who Won't Be Taken for a Ride, 12 No. 3 Persp. 168 (2004).

With thanks to Lorraine Bannai for sharing her bibliography on this same topic.


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Melissa H. Weresh, *Form and Substance: Standards for Promotion and Retention of Legal Writing Faculty on Clinical Tenure Track*, 37 Golden Gate U. L. Rev. 281 (2007).