Expectations and preferences regarding writing are largely cultural.

- Placement of Thesis Statement
  - Beginning, Middle, or End?
- Rhetorical pattern/Organization
  - Linear, Zig-Zag, Circular?
- Amount and type of Detail
  - What is important for the audience to know?
- Sentence Structure
  - Short and Concise vs. Long and Elaborate?
- Punctuation
  - Standard vs. Experimental?

Remember that American Academic expectations and preferences are *unfamiliar* to many International, ESL, and Developmental writers.

- To those who are new to the academy, academic expectations are not always as obvious as experienced academics believe.

It’s natural for International writers to feel defensive when told that their writing is too complex, obtuse, and circuitous.

- Imagine studying in another country and being told that your writing is too simplistic, straightforward, and direct?

The responsibility for comprehension is different in different cultures and languages.

- *Writer Responsible* cultures/languages place the responsibility for clear communication on the writer. E.g. American culture/English language.
- *Reader-Responsible* cultures/languages expect the reader to discern the writer’s ideas and intentions. E.g. Japanese culture/language.

Teachers can accept different cultural preferences to different degrees.

- Grammar might be evaluated differently for non-native and native speakers.
- Evaluation might focus on HOCs even more than normal.
- American-style writing might be taught as one of many “literacies” in a highly globalized world that increasingly requires multiple literacies.

Depending on how much you accept different cultural preferences, you should be prepared to adapt your teaching in certain ways:

- Provide more explicit instruction, especially about expectations
  - If someone doesn’t know the expectation, how can he/she meet it?
- Provide more directive instruction about rhetorical patterns and errors
  - Students aren’t lazy or stupid. They honestly don’t know.
- Give fewer LOC/Grammar comments and focus more on “error patterns”
  - Focusing on “error patterns” avoids demoralizing the student, makes commenting more efficient, and refocuses student on HOCs
- Allow more flexibility with assignments and approaches
  - Students from non-democracies may feel uncomfortable with political topics.
  - Students from some cultures may feel uncomfortable writing about personal things.