1. What was the outcome of your project and how did it align with your original goals as stated in your application?

The end goal of this project was broadly to create templates for accessible writing assignments that faculty could simply download/open and fill in with their own specifics. We also aimed to design a list of best practices in accommodation. Broadly, we wanted to learn more about accessibility in writing studies and Universal Design in learning.

Ultimately, we did meet these goals and have created a document that explains accessible writing assignment practices, including anticipating accommodations and a google doc template for faculty use.

I had imagined several templates, but after we researched, I found that one broad template would be a better option. Best writing assignment practices and accessibility guidelines are the same across disciplines and genres.

2. What sense do you have at this point that your project has enhanced student learning and what will you be looking at in the future to know whether the project was successful?

I cannot yet gauge the learning outcomes of my own students, let alone all Whitman students and faculty teaching writing.

I will know this is successful when I see other faculty using the template and students benefitting from the clarity and accessibility. I will likely gain this information both in meetings with faculty as the Writing Program Director and in meetings with my student tutors in the COWS.

I can say that Sueli and I learned quite a bit and are still excited to learn more. One of the most exciting and frustrating parts of the possibility of UDL is that no matter how much you learn and adapt, inevitably there are still students' needs you have not anticipated and which you will have to consider in making revisions to your teaching practices. If I could boil this UDL/accessibility principle down, I'd say that we instructors need to maintain the same growth mindset that we expect our students to hold and that together we will learn so much more than if we were not open to adaptation.

3. What were the limitations or failings of this project, and how, in retrospect, might they have been better addressed or remedied?

I think the most difficult part of this was trying to anticipate ALL needs of ALL students. We quickly found that we needed to think in broader strokes about principles that might adapt to many needs. Since growing through this process, I feel prepared for adapting the template we created as we learn more and to create similar documents more easily.

4. How do you envision sharing the results of your work with other colleagues at Whitman (or elsewhere)?

The google doc template is already available as a Whitman template in the template gallery of our google accounts. I plan to link to the overview and the template on the COWS website as well as in the FYS Canvas clearinghouse. The word document template (which software is less accessible in general, but which many academics use) will accompany the google doc on the webpage for download. It will be available when the website is updated for fall.