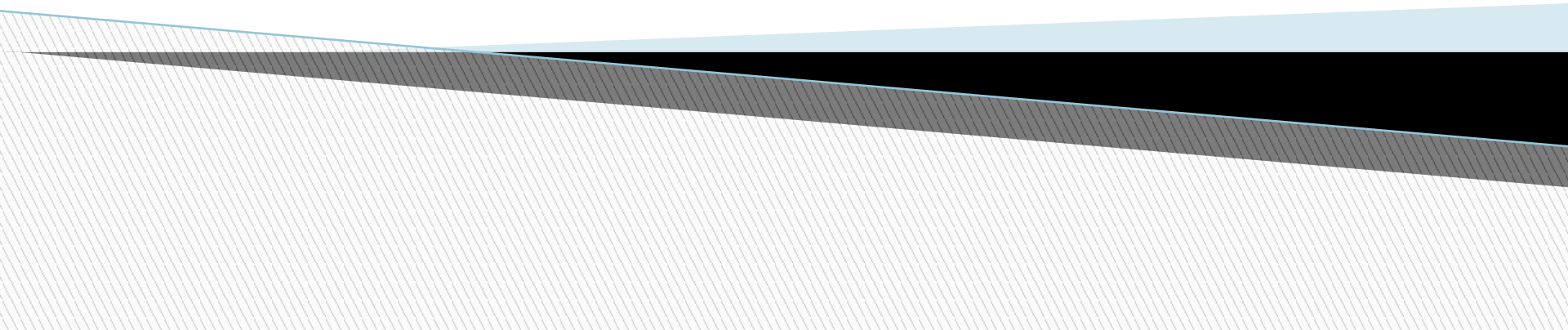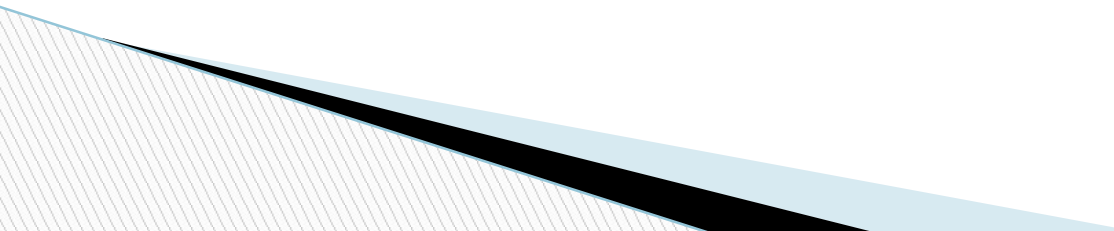# Facilitating the Academic Success of International Undergraduate Students

International Student Symposium
November 20, 2019
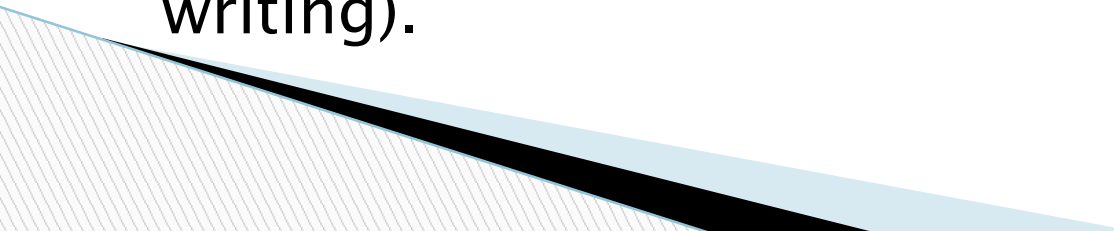
Fan Shen, "The Classroom and the Wider Culture: Identity as a Key to Learning English Composition"

"…a key to my success in learning English composition…[was] *not to be my Chinese self* at all. That is to say, when I write in English, I have to wrestle with and abandon (at least temporarily) the whole system of ideology which previously defined me in myself…I had to create an English self and be *that* self."

AWP: Successfully Serving International Students

- Over 90% of students claim that AWP courses have armed them with the skills they need for successful critical reading, thinking, and writing.

- Over 90% of students claim that AWP courses have helped them to feel confident as writers.

- Over 86% of AWP 1 international students and 83% of AWP 2A-2B international students earn an A or B in their college writing courses (compared with 89% of non-international students placed directly into college writing).
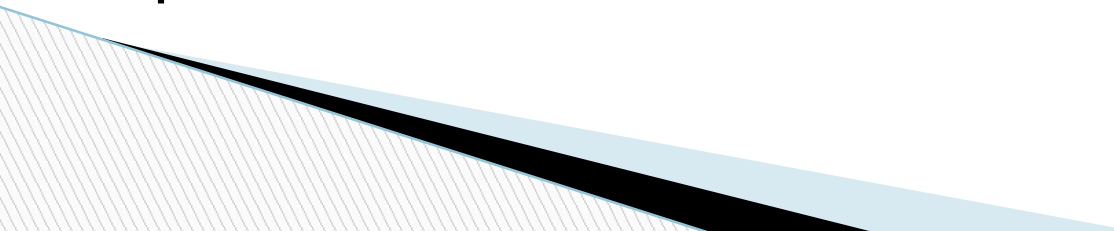
What are we doing right?
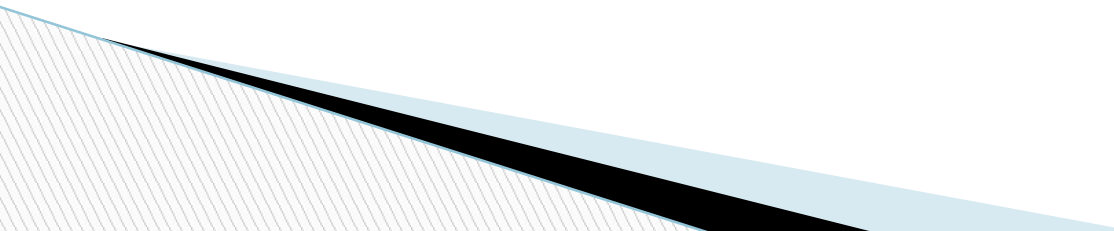
Deficit Mindset vs. Equity/Asset Mindset

A deficit mindset looks at students and their work to determine where they are falling short.

An equity/asset mindset looks at students and their work to determine what diverse strengths and capabilities they are bringing to the table.
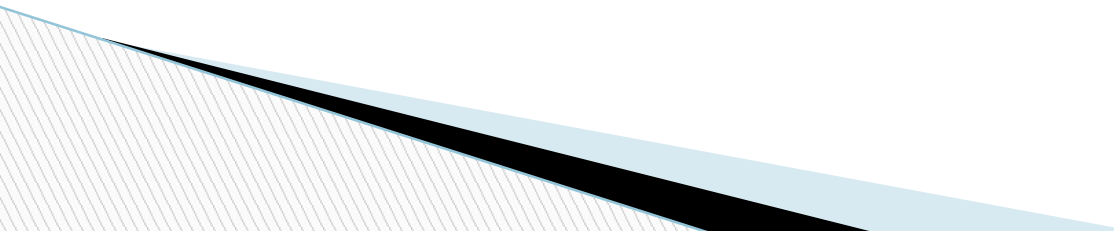
An equity/asset mindset encourages universal design: what helps *one* student "access" the course materials will help *all* students access the course materials.
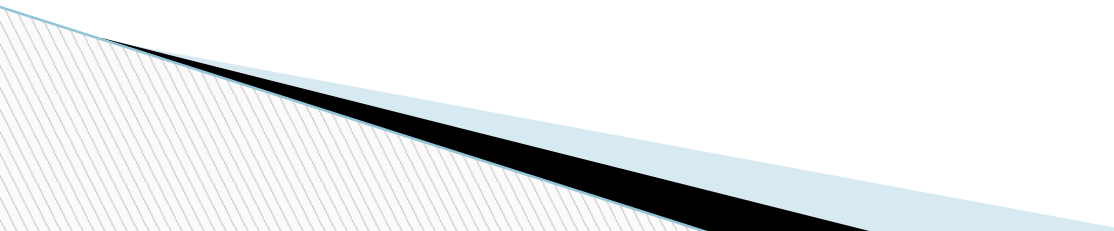
AWP Principles of Instruction

- Meeting students where they are

- Teaching the whole student

Establishing Visibility

- Making practices and conventions (including language conventions) visible

- Making our students feel visible

Making Language Conventions Visible

We use the principles of style to help students improve sentences, connections among sentences, and paragraph development:

- Actor/Action Principle
- Old-to-new Principle
- Consistent Subject Strings Principle
- Emphasis Principle
- Concision Principle

Actor/Action Principle:

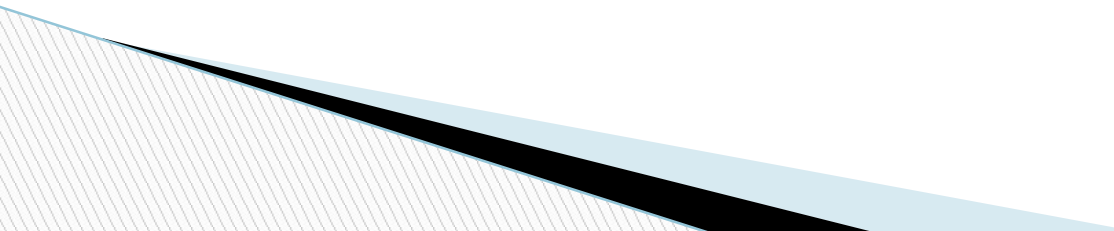Good sentences are built around a clearly designated actor.

The action should be represented by a good, active verb—NOT by abstract nouns masquerading as verbs.

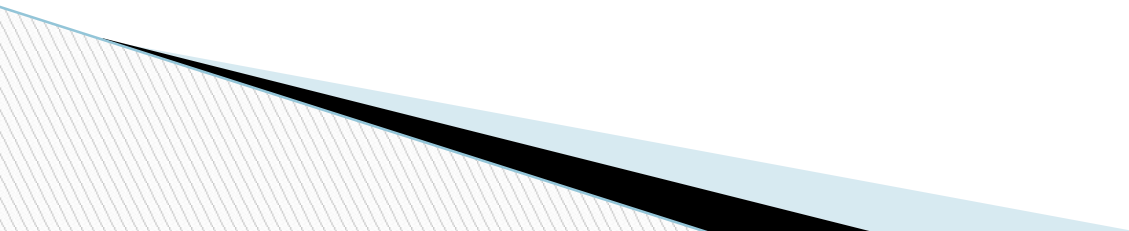# Cohesion and Coherence

Old-to-New Principle: A paragraph is <u>cohesive</u>--has "flow"--if its sentences fit together well.

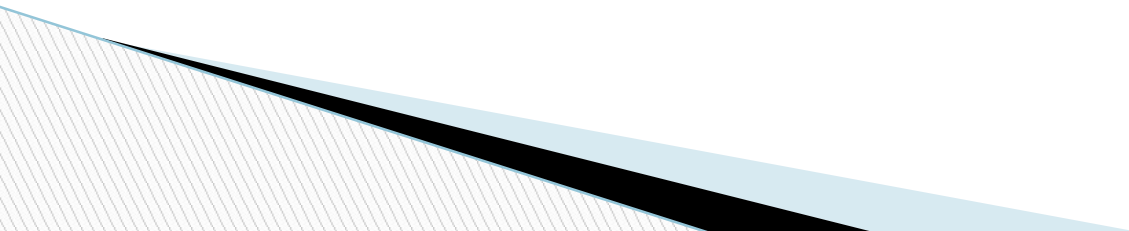Consistent Subject Strings: A paragraph is <u>coherent</u> if all the sentences focus on the same topic.

Original Student Text

Student sample removed.

Revised Text using Style

Student sample removed.

What changed?

Original:

Student sample removed.

Revision:

Student sample removed.

Establishing Visibility:
Meeting students where they are

1. Make your students feel visible by learning their names and engaging them in activities so that they learn the names of their classmates. This helps establish a community of learners.

2. Make your students feel visible by facilitating their participation in class. Don't be afraid to cold-call.

3. Meet your students where they are by being aware of context and background; don't assume your students have cultural or historic knowledge OR that they understand idiomatic expressions.

4. Make your students feel visible by including multicultural references in lectures/course content when appropriate.

5. Meet your students where they are by communicating the rationale underlying assignments and activities; offer students the opportunity to express their understanding of the rationale as the term progresses.

Establishing Visibility:
Engaging the whole student

6. Engage the whole student by acknowledging their motivations for studying at UC San Diego--where they come from, and where they hope to go.

7. Engage the whole student not only by acknowledging any challenges that students may have--such participating in class discussions--but also by acknowledging the strengths they bring.

8. Make students feel visible by conveying interest in them and by showing confidence in their ability to learn through their own best efforts.

9. Make the curriculum visible by offering regular opportunities for students to ask for clarification. Go beyond "Do you understand?" to "What did you understand about…?"

10. Make the university visible by offering a list of resources on campus and resources within your department.