We compared two different approaches to providing performance feedback to students in a high enrollment (N=300) online introductory university course in special education. The first form of feedback was the traditional form in which the instructor analyzed the student’s submission and wrote a detailed critique including suggestions for improvement. The second form of feedback was a model response to which student’s could compare their own submission. The model response provided annotation of the critical aspects of the model response based upon error analysis of responses from students in previous offerings the course.

Analysis of variance revealed that student’s subsequent performance on similar assignments did not differ based upon the feedback format. However, the second form of feedback was more efficient for both student and faculty. That is, it required less time for the faculty to prepare, less time for students to access. In addition, it was more immediate. Finally, it became apparent that student’s will utilize feedback only when the time required to access it and analyze it does not exceed a critical time (15 minutes or less) and that students will access either form of feedback only one time although they may have unlimited opportunity to do so.