

Editorial

With this issue, the *WPA Newsletter* becomes a full-fledged journal. We confess we really didn't expect to leave the comfortable nest of newsletter publication so soon. Practical considerations drove us to it. We're still a little shaky on our pinions. Our first few flights are likely to be short ones. But we are glad we've taken wing, and we hope our fellow WPAs share our exhilaration.

We have decided to call our new self simply **WPA: Writing Program Administration**. We will continue, as a journal, the editorial direction established during the past year in the *Newsletter*. We will continue to be a refereed publication whose purpose is to focus thought, information, and expertise relevant to the teaching-administrative function of writing program administration and to explain to educators and the general public the special needs, values, and aims of writing program administrators.

Articles published in *WPA* will be read and approved by the journal's Board of Editors, a panel of knowledgeable and respected people in the field of writing program administration who generously contribute their time and expertise. Each advisory Editor is or has been a writing program administrator. Each is therefore in a position to help evaluate the quality and significance of material submitted for publication. As a result, members of the Council of Writing Program Administrators (WPA), and other readers, are assured that communication shared through this medium is well informed and reliable, as well as readable and helpful; as a result also, publication in *WPA* can be cited with confidence on our authors' curriculum vitae.

WPA is necessary to writing program administrators and to the larger educational community, we believe, because it helps define an important field within our profession. Although many of us do most of the other things that college and university administrators do—hire and fire, tinker with budgets, schedule classes, and keep our programs running from day to day—WPAs also serve an institutional function quite distinct from that served by presidents, deans, chairs, provosts, and the like. Most writing program administrators continue to be writing teachers, differing from other writing teachers only in the nature of the people we teach. We teach not only college and university students, but often other college and university teachers as well. We are called upon sometimes to teach other administrators, trustees, and legislators, and even the general public. As a result, WPAs are not just teachers who also administrate, or administrators who also teach. We administrate in part *by* teaching. We teach in part *through* administration.

As the "voice" of writing program administrators, *WPA* will try to speak with as wide and diverse an authority as possible, in order to synthesize thought,

information, and expertise appropriate to this distinct institutional function. In the recent past, the *WPA Newsletter* has published articles on training programs for WPAs, on organizing small regional conferences, and on interviewing and hiring. This first issue in journal format focuses generally on program definition and evaluation. Future issues of *WPA* will contain articles on large-scale testing and its implications for WPAs, on faculty development, on evaluating writing faculty, and on resources available to WPAs in graduate courses and programs devoted to higher education administration. Beyond these lie many topics which *WPA* authors might conceivably address: relations with government bureaus and legislatures; grant sources and strategies; uses of public relations techniques; techniques of organization and leadership; budgeting; institutional politics; working conditions; training and retraining teachers; program planning; defining, promulgating, and attaining curricular goals; tenure and promotion; integrating basic writing into composition programs; the care and feeding of faculty, students, and fellow administrators; relations with faculty unions; and so on.

We believe that exploring the ramifications of these and other such topics can help us to do our job better, because it will contribute to a better understanding of that job by ourselves, by senior administrators who oversee our work, and by colleagues who are directly affected by our actions, decisions, and influence as writing program administrators.

A word of thanks

WPA exists as a journal because of the educational foresight and concern of Brooklyn College's Dean of the School of Humanities, Maurice Kramer. Through his offices, Brooklyn College has undertaken to support the journal's publication during its precarious first few years of life. He joins us in our belief that writing program administration is a humanistic pursuit of great importance to higher education.

Several members of the Brooklyn College community have generously contributed to planning the journal and getting it on its way: Teresa Edge, Director of College Publications; Rochelle Lorber, Assistant Editor, College Publications; Laurence Mucciolo, Director of Budget and Facilities Planning; Maurice Callahan and William Graizel, Assistants to the Dean of the School of Humanities; Sydney Ornstein of the Brooklyn College Division of General Services; and Lawrence Schweitzer of the Brooklyn College Computer Center. Each of these people has made important concrete and practical contributions to *WPA*. Teresa Edge has also donated valuable time to the patient guidance and instruction of *WPA*'s neophyte Editor. I owe them all deepest thanks.

Last, too late, and with profound sadness, we thank Mina Shaughnessy, whose invaluable help and companionship we have lost. Mina had "lots to say about writing program administration," but never got to say it. We carry on in her spirit.

Ken Bruffee