

Journal of the Council of Writing Program Administrators  
Volume 12, Numbers 1-2, Fall/Winter, 1988

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# Council of Writing Program Administrators

The Council of Writing Program Administrators is a national association of college and university faculty who serve or have served as directors of freshman composition or writing programs, coordinators of writing centers and writing workshops, chairpersons and members of writing program-related committees, or in similar administrative capacities. The Council of Writing Program Administrators is an affiliate of the Association of American Colleges.

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## Author's Guide

The Editor of *WPA: Writing Program Administration* invites contributions that are appropriate to the interests and concerns of those who administer writing programs in American and Canadian colleges and universities. Articles on teaching writing or research in composition are acceptable only if they deal with the relationship of these activities to program administration. *WPA* is especially interested in articles on topics such as establishing and maintaining a cohesive writing program, training composition staff, testing and evaluating students and programs, working with department chairs and deans, collaborating with high school or community college teachers, and so on.

The length of articles should be approximately 2-4,000 words. Authors should submit an original plus two copies, with the author identified only on a separate cover letter. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you would like a copy of your manuscript returned to you. All articles are anonymously reviewed by our Editorial Board, and their responses will be forwarded to you within about ten weeks of receipt of the manuscript.

Articles should be suitably documented using the current *MLA Handbook*, although as much reference as possible should be included within the text. Annotated bibliographies accompanying articles are encouraged, as well as any other apparatus which might make material more conceptually and practically valuable to working writing program administrators. The editor reserves the right to edit manuscripts to conform to the style of the journal.

Authors whose articles are accepted for publication will be asked to submit their article both in print form and on IBM compatible disk, if possible. (An article submitted on disk using WordPerfect in particular will greatly facilitate production.) Authors will also be asked to submit a 100 word biography for inclusion in the "Notes on Contributors" section of the journal.

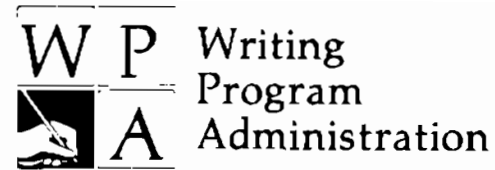
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## Editor's Note

Volume 12 marks my debut as editor of *WPA: Writing Program Administration*. Putting together this issue has been a remarkable voyage of discovery for me. Especially enjoyable has been working with a faithful and dedicated editorial board, whose insightful comments are invaluable to me and to the authors whose articles they read and review. The authors contributing to this issue were patient with the necessary snafus attendant to an editorial change, for which I am grateful. It has been my distinct pleasure to work with all of you as together we shaped your articles for the *WPA* audience.

I trust that the readers of this journal issue will find the articles as stimulating as I have. The issue begins with a commentary by John Trimbur and Barbara Cambridge on the Wyoming Conference Resolution, at the behest of the WPA Executive Committee. It was the feeling of the Executive Committee that WPAs should lend their support to the resolution publically in our journal. John and Barbara graciously consented to articulate the Committee's decision and to discuss its ramifications for WPAs.

This issue of *WPA* features some new voices: the Writing Center Director and the teacher in the two-year college. Gary A. Olson and Evelyn Ashton-Jones raise the consciousness of their colleagues who direct other writing programs by pointing out to us the ongoing struggle for professional status faced by those who direct writing centers. Helon Howell Raines in her article on teaching writing in two-year colleges encourages us to enhance the dialogue between universities and their community college colleagues.

The last two articles in this issue describe two very different writing-across-the-curriculum programs, one at a small, liberal arts college and the other at a large, state university. Taken together, the articles show the creative approaches WPAs are taking to adapt cross-curricular writing programs to their own college contexts. I hope that readers will learn from these descriptions and be able to adapt the authors' creative ideas to their own campuses.

As Bill Smith was fond of saying, a journal is only as good as its contributors. Keep those good articles coming. I will make every effort to respond to all manuscripts promptly with personal comments as well as comments from our editorial board.

Finally, I would like to publically thank Bill Smith for his confidence in me and for his help in the move of the WPA journal back to its former home at Utah State University. Bill set a high professional standard for the WPA journal; all of us in the Council of Writing Program Administrators join in thanking him for his years of service to the organization and in wishing him well for the future.

Christine Hult

## The Wyoming Conference Resolution: A Beginning

John Trimbur and Barbara Cambridge

On March 17, 1988, the Executive Committee of the Council of Writing Program Administrators voted unanimously to endorse the Wyoming Conference Resolution. The resolution calls on the Executive Committee of CCCC to formulate professional standards for salary levels and working conditions of postsecondary writing teachers, to set up grievance procedures against institutions which fail to comply with these standards, and to establish means to censure publicly institutions found to be in non-compliance (see Appendix). Because the Wyoming Conference Resolution focuses at long last on important issues concerning the unfair treatment of writing teachers, we believe it represents an important step forward in the growing political maturity and self-determination of composition studies and writing programs.

The resolution was drafted at the Wyoming Conference in the summer of 1986, following a remarkable release of the anger and bitterness so deeply felt in the rank and file of writing teachers—anger about the poor conditions that make it difficult to teach properly and bitterness about the insecurity and powerlessness of so many who teach writing. In their report on the Wyoming Conference Resolution published in *College English* (49, March, 1987: 274-280), Linda Robertson, Sharon Crowley, and Frank Lentricchia tell the story of how James Slevin and James Sledd galvanized the common sense of outrage among writing teachers across the board—graduate teaching assistants, part-time faculty, established teachers and scholars, tenured and untenured, from community colleges to private liberal arts schools and research universities. This outrage focused on the unfair practices many writing teachers face, the exploitation of part-time faculty, the tenure fights that should never have happened. What occurred at Wyoming, however, went beyond the usual retelling of academic horror stories. More important, the Wyoming Conference Resolution represents the formation of a political will among writing teachers—a collective decision that we do not have to accept second class status because we are interested in the study and teaching of writing and that together we can determine our own fate as a profession and pursue our hopes as writing teachers, scholars, and program administrators.



The Wyoming Conference Resolution passed by a unanimous vote at the CCCC business meeting in Atlanta the following March, 1987. Since then a CCCC task force on the resolution has decided to work through the grievance procedures of regional accreditation agencies, the AAUP, the American Association of Colleges, and other existing organizations.

## I.

Whatever the outcome of the CCCC task force's efforts to implement the Wyoming Conference Resolution—and we share the concern of many in our profession that its critical edge may be blunted by relying on existing organizations rather than on ourselves—the importance of the resolution finally is that it reflects a growing sense of self-confidence in composition studies and writing programs and in our ability to change unfair and unjust treatment of ourselves and our colleagues. The Wyoming Conference Resolution states outright and without apology what is required to do our jobs well. It amounts to a declaration of independence on the part of writing teachers, a recognition that together we can advance our collective interests and define our future.

This feeling of empowerment spreading across our field is not just a symbolic gesture or an act of the imagination. It also mediates and gives expression to some real, if limited and uneven, changes in the material conditions of teaching writing. Since the mid-seventies, in the wake of a perceived literacy crisis and renewed attention to undergraduate education, writing programs have proliferated. The movement to revise and strengthen a core curriculum of undergraduate studies has led many colleges and universities to reinstate required freshman composition sequences dropped in the sixties and early seventies. Writing-across-the-curriculum programs have spread, as have advanced composition courses of all types, in business, scientific, technical, and legal writing. From the mid-seventies on, as career-minded students flocked to majors in business, economics, and computer science and away from traditional humanities offerings, many writing programs have expanded their enrollments, increasing their share of FTE's and relative social weight within English departments. At the graduate level, programs in rhetoric and composition have maintained a steady growth rate while many literature programs have languished. New journals keep appearing, and the volume and quality of research and scholarship in rhetoric and composition have increased dramatically. On top of all this, the job market in the past two years has been encouraging to composition specialists, for senior faculty vying for endowed chairs and recent Ph.D.'s alike.

As Alexis de Tocqueville theorized about the French Revolution, people rebel against injustice not when oppression is most intense but

when social expectations are on the rise. This seems to be the case today with composition studies. The Wyoming Conference Resolution occurs at a moment of upswing in our profession that makes us less willing to accept the old conditions and the old explanations. Its call for justice and fair treatment also asserts the validity of our work as writing teachers, scholars, and program administrators and articulates a growing desire in composition studies to set the record straight about why English Studies has overlooked rhetoric and composition and why colleges and universities have failed to support their writing programs.

We have come to realize that the persistent job insecurities and marginalized status of writing teachers result from a hierarchy of values that determines institutional and departmental priorities, not from tight budgets or demographic realities, as we were told in the mid-seventies. We have come to see that the economy in higher education is always political. The doomsday demographics academic officers used to freeze lines, frighten faculty, and assign part-time and non-tenure track to teach composition never materialized. Instead of the predicted decline between 1974 and 1984, the number of students enrolled in higher education increased at a rate of 20%. At the same time, the number of new Ph.D.'s in English able to find tenure track positions dipped to 40%, creating a pool of surplus labor and squeezing individuals out of academics. The problem was, and to a large extent remains, not a lack of students and not just a lack of jobs for teachers, but a particular lack of institutional commitment to the faculty who do research in rhetoric and composition, who teach writing, and who administer writing programs. The situation of composition studies and the teaching of writing is a political one, shaped by a long and sometimes willful misunderstanding of what it means to study and teach writing. In this regard, the Wyoming Conference Resolution is a telling sign of the building sentiment within composition studies to challenge the prevailing hierarchy in English Studies and the reward system and institutional priorities of higher education—to assert the worthiness and viability of our own field of inquiry and activity.

## II.

From the blatant economic exploitation of part-time faculty to the smallest insensitivities and oversights, the conditions that the Wyoming Conference Resolution protests are familiar terrain to writing program administrators. These conditions, moreover, not only describe the facts of everyday life in writing programs, but also constitute the source of certain troubling asymmetries of power within writing programs and the profession as a whole. Part of our ongoing struggle is to define composition studies and writing programs not as service functions at the margin

of the academy but as legitimate scholarly and pedagogical activities central to English Studies and to the mission of higher education in general. The professional recognition for which we have fought so hard, however, also brings with it the risk that our field will reproduce the dominant academic logic that privileges research "opportunities" over teaching "loads" and will perpetuate a two-caste system of researchers, scholars, theorists, and program administrators at the top of the field and classroom teachers below.

For writing program administrators, the tensions caused by the professionalization of composition studies and writing programs are posed quite sharply. WPAs exist in a complicated set of relationships to the faculty they train and supervise, the programs they run, and the careers to which they aspire. A recent survey found that 68% of WPAs are tenured. If not well paid, WPAs are often times at least secure, often managing a staff of insecure and definitely underpaid part-time faculty. In certain respects, WPAs resemble a labor aristocracy in writing instruction. Like trade union bureaucrats, WPAs are increasingly removed from the assembly line, on released time from the daily struggles at the point of production. Of course, WPAs need and deserve compensation to carry out their duties. The danger is that the growth and professionalization of writing programs—which in part have contributed to the courage of writing teachers to speak out against unjust practices in the first place—may increase social distance among writing faculty and within writing programs.

Despite the upturn in the job market and the willingness and desire of colleges and universities, as well as English departments, to hire composition specialists, the fact is that a new senior person and some Ph.D.'s recently out of graduate programs in rhetoric and composition cannot yet offset the excessive reliance on part-time faculty and the perpetuation of a two-caste system. The addition of permanent positions in composition is certainly a gesture of good will and perhaps of a better understanding of what it means to study and teach writing, a sign that composition studies has achieved some success in legitimizing itself as a body of theory and practice. But, as we learn to assert ourselves and take control of our destiny, we must also continue to confront our own internal organization, to resist the unnecessary and unhelpful polarization of scholarship and pedagogy that determines the structure and reward system of most academic disciplines. We need to articulate a vision of composition studies as a field of applied theory that connects research and scholarship to teaching and program development.

### III.

The real power of the Wyoming Conference Resolution is that it raises a series of issues which cannot be resolved and makes a series of demands

which cannot be met under current conditions. We believe the Wyoming Conference Resolution should be seen not just as an end in itself but as an initiator. If the Wyoming Conference Resolution begins with the felt needs of writing teachers, the anecdotal accounts and individual testimonies we have all heard about injustice and exploitation, it goes on to link these felt needs, the points at which the personal becomes political in the lives of writing teachers, to the need for wider and more sweeping changes in the role of English Studies and the priorities of higher education. To implement the Wyoming Conference Resolution would change what it means to study and teach reading and writing, literature and composition. It would require a reallocation of resources and personnel and a revision of the current hierarchy that would transform English Studies from a field that valorizes literary texts over "naive" student texts and privileges the virtuoso performances of specialist critics over ordinary readers. It would require imagining English Studies as a field that takes the critical and emancipatory potentiality of literacy as its point of departure, so that reading and writing can become public and empowering activities for both students and teachers, to name their desires and to make their own history. And that, we believe, is something worth fighting for.

## Appendix

### THE WYOMING CONFERENCE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the salaries and working conditions of post-secondary teachers with primary responsibility for the teaching of writing are fundamentally unfair as judged by any reasonable professional standards (e.g., unfair in excessive teaching loads, unreasonably large class sizes, salary inequities, lack of benefits and professional status, and barriers to professional status, and barriers to professional advancement);

AND WHEREAS, as a consequence of these unreasonable working conditions, highly dedicated teachers are often frustrated in their desire to provide students the time and attention which students both deserve and need;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Executive Committee of College Composition and Communication be charged with the following:

1. To formulate, after appropriate consultations with post-secondary teachers of writing, professional standards and expectations for salary levels and working conditions of post-secondary teachers of writing.
2. To establish a procedure for hearing grievances brought by post-secondary teachers of writing—either singly or collectively—against apparent institutional non-compliance with these standards and expectations.
3. To establish a procedure for acting upon a finding of non-compliance; specifically, to issue a letter of censure to an individual institution's administration, Board of Regents or Trustees, State legislators (where pertinent), and to publicize the finding to the public-at-large, the educational community in general, and to our membership.



## Writing Center Directors: The Search for Professional Status

Gary A. Olson and Evelyn Ashton-Jones

During the past decade, the pages of *WPA* and other journals have recorded our efforts to define our roles as writing program administrators. In the last few years in particular, we have begun to experience a period of intense self-scrutiny, evidenced by a sharp increase in the number of books and articles published on the subject. However, preoccupied with our roles in managing university-wide writing programs, we have perhaps paid too little attention to the one writing program administrator who could benefit most from our understanding: the writing center director.

The role of the writing center director has never been adequately defined, and center directors are thus experiencing a kind of identity crisis. The lack of consensus about the center director's role is unfortunate, since the writing center is an essential complement to any comprehensive writing program.<sup>1</sup> Given current composition theory's emphasis on the process of composing and on the social context of language and knowledge, the writing center embodies what current theory says is most important about writing pedagogy. If, in fact, as most compositionists argue, addressing individual writers' processes rather than a "text" is the way to help writers produce better writing, and if language and writing are social in nature, then the writing center very well may be the purest form of theory put into practice.<sup>2</sup> Thus, it is particularly unfortunate that the writing center director's role is so ill-defined.

Certainly, it is a difficult role to define because, like freshman English programs, writing centers are institution-specific in structure and function. Nevertheless, certain responsibilities and objectives of centers and their directors do remain constant, and identifying and analyzing these similarities will help us move toward a useful definition of the director's role. One step in defining this role is to explore how it is perceived by freshman English directors—those who on most campuses direct the overall writing program, or at least its largest component. Freshman English directors' conception of the status and responsibilities of the center director is especially important because both directors share a common goal: to provide quality writing instruction to students across the university. In addition, freshman English directors' perceptions provide a partial indication of how writing center directors are perceived by

the faculty in general. To discover their perceptions, we surveyed 188 freshman English directors across the nation. (See the appendix for a description of this survey.)

Because the role of center director varies from institution to institution, the respondents' perceptions were not always unanimous; nevertheless, several clear patterns emerged in the responses. Overall, what we found is that freshman English directors are more likely to view the writing center director simply as an administrator, not as a teacher, a scholar, or even a writing specialist.

## Teacher, Scholar, or Administrator?

For example, of twenty items listed on our questionnaire, the five rated most "essential" relate to the director's role as an administrator. Here are those five activities, followed by the percentage of respondents who consider them "essential":

- training tutors (84%)
- possessing strong communication skills (81%)
- monitoring the quality of the staff's tutoring (80%)
- communicating with the composition director (70%)
- recruiting and hiring tutors (69%)

Understandably, the respondents' most central concern is the director's role in recruiting, hiring, training, and monitoring tutors. In fact, in response to the open-ended questions supplementing the twenty-item rating scale, over 67 respondents (36%) identify one or a combination of these activities as the "most important aspect" of the director's job. As one respondent puts it, the writing center director is "above all responsible for ensuring that students have access to state-of-the-art tutoring."

Nor is it surprising that strong communication skills and regular communication with the composition director should rate so highly. The ability to communicate effectively would indeed seem to be essential for training and monitoring tutors and for working in conjunction with the composition director. In fact, in their prose remarks, many respondents link communication with interpersonal skills, saying these are "indispensable" for running a successful center. One respondent writes that the director must be able to interact effectively not only with the composition director but with "everyone from entering students to the Dean." Another sums up how crucial interpersonal skills are to the position: the writing center director must be "a specialist in constructive human relations."

While freshman English directors perceive the center director as an administrator, they are less inclined to see him or her as a "teacher," or at least this role is of lesser importance. For example, these five activities are among those that received the lowest "essential" rating:

- teaching writing courses (32%)
- receiving outstanding teaching evaluations for classroom teaching (23%)
- teaching courses in tutoring and composition pedagogy (21%)
- conducting writing workshops for the university community (15%)
- familiarizing faculty with new developments in composition (12%)

Clearly, of all twenty items, lowest in priority are those activities that involve teaching and interacting with people beyond the confines of the center. Classroom teaching is de-emphasized, especially teaching composition and pedagogy courses and receiving outstanding evaluations. For instance, fewer than a third of the respondents agree that it is "essential" for the director to teach writing courses, and only 15% that the director conduct university-wide workshops. Also, activities related to faculty development—being a teacher of fellow teachers—rank lowest of all. Only 12% of the respondents believe the director should "familiarize faculty with developments in composition."

While the center director's numerous responsibilities within the center might explain why composition directors de-emphasize classroom and workshop teaching, there is a surprising amount of disagreement about the center director's role as a teacher even within the center. Whether the center director should teach is uncertain. For example, a large number of respondents (40) don't believe the director should participate in tutoring—the center's version of teaching. Of the significant number who do believe the director should tutor students, many qualify their responses: the director should tutor "just enough to have a feel for students' needs" or "simply to remain in touch."<sup>3</sup> More importantly, it appears that not many respondents view tutoring students or training tutors as "real" teaching; even though they perceive tutor training as the single most important responsibility of the center director, their responses indicate that they do not define this activity—or tutoring students—as "teaching." John Trimbur, writing in *WPA*, describes this attitude as a product of "the academic caste system" and attributes it to the "traditional academic hierarchy's scale of values." According to this value system, Trimbur claims, the "writing center's time is less valuable than a faculty member's" ("Students" 34).

If freshman English directors do not recognize the center director as a "teacher," they appear equally disinclined to see the director as a

"scholar" or as a "trained specialist." Only 33% say it is "essential" that the director "maintain scholarship." One respondent comments that scholarship might be "helpful if he or she has the time," and another explains that scholarship is not necessary because the director is a TA. To be fair, some respondents (three to be exact) mention that the director should possess "knowledge of current composition theory," and one states that the director should have a "national reputation as a researcher"; but the great preponderance of respondents do not find scholarship to be important for center directors.

Of course, it can be argued that the writing center director does not need to be a scholar (or even a teacher) to run an effective center; that is, the director's position can be defined as purely administrative. And there may be some truth to this argument. But the center director's status reflects and represents the status of the center itself, and status in academe derives from scholarly credentials. Typically, administrators—university provosts, department chairs, even freshman English directors—all prove themselves *first* as competent scholars *before* being given the responsibilities of administration. To the extent that these values do not apply to writing center directors, we can assume that the center director and the center itself are not valued in the academic community. And, perhaps more importantly, unlike many high-level administrative positions in the university, the position of writing center director is discipline-specific. Not only is it inextricably linked to an academic discipline—composition—but writing center direction itself is recognized as a legitimate "field," complete with an NCTE-sanctioned association, a professional journal and newsletter, and books on writing centers published by reputable houses, including NCTE. Thus, it seems unfair to suggest that center directors should remain purely "administrative" and, in so doing, to deny writing directors the same kind of professional recognition afforded most academic administrators and *all* other writing program administrators.

In addition, when asked whether the director should be a trained composition specialist, nearly a fourth said "no" or it "doesn't matter." One respondent writes, "It would be helpful if the director is a trained specialist, but above all she must be an administrator." This attitude sums up our main point: freshman English directors see center directors primarily as administrators and only secondarily, if at all, as teachers or scholars. As one respondent writes, "Other things are more important."<sup>4</sup>

In fact, many freshman English directors do not seem to view the director as a full faculty member who teaches and engages in scholarly research; this is reflected in answers to survey questions about the director's professional status. While it is true that 113 respondents believe the director should hold a tenure-track appointment—as most

faculty do—the remainder (75) state that the director's appointment should be nontenure-track, joint faculty/staff, staff only, or that it does not matter at all. A few respondents write emphatically that the director's position should be "defined as a staff position." Others comment that because TAs direct their centers the question is irrelevant, and 17 write that "it doesn't matter; tenure or nontenure track—either could work." Thus, a substantial number of respondents do not acknowledge the director as a fellow member of the faculty or simply are unconcerned.<sup>5</sup>

## Teachers Without Voices: A Paradox of Power

What do the survey data tell us in general about the writing center director? In a way, they suggest that the center director is perceived as a kind of *wife*. Like the idealized support-mate Judy Syfers describes in her well-anthologized essay, the director is expected to keep a good house, to make sure the center "runs smoothly." She—and, incidentally, a substantial number of respondents use the generic "she"—even has a certain amount of power within her house, enough, at least, to make sure her charges behave. But her influence is confined within four walls; outside, she is voiceless, unable to participate as a full member of the large community. She is not encouraged to "work" as the real members of the academic community do, and when she is allowed to, she is certainly not compensated fully for her labor, since her labor is not truly valued by the community. In short, her place is in the home.

If this wife metaphor seems a bit forced, consider these representative responses to the question, "What important qualities and responsibilities are not listed on this questionnaire?":

- the writing center director should be "nice!" (The respondent included the exclamation point.)
- she should "know her place in the chain of command and respect it"
- she should be "friendly, cooperative, and have lots of personality"
- she should be "personable and flexible"
- she should be "supportive but not critical"
- she should not only be "sensitive to the needs of others," but be able to "recognize what needs are not being met" and "respond to the needs of the university whatever they become"
- she should "maintain an inventory of equipment and supplies" (kitchen utensils, no doubt)
- and (believe it or not) she should "provide chocolate chip cookies to writing center clients"

Amusing? Perhaps on the surface. But the attitude underlying these remarks subtly helps prevent center directors from fulfilling their potential as teachers, scholars, and program administrators, and it keeps centers themselves from achieving their mission. As we all know, composition theory stresses that the most effective pedagogy is one in which teachers interact with their students, in which teachers help writers find their own voices, their own *authority* to construct texts. Such theory also emphasizes that meaning-making is a communal, social activity. In no other place in the university is there a better opportunity to engage in this kind of interaction than in the writing center. Interactive learning is much more likely to occur during one-on-one or small group instruction in the center than in the typical teacher-centered classroom, or even in a class utilizing the workshop approach. Yet, it is sadly ironic that writing center directors, the very persons charged with empowering students to find their own voices, are themselves constrained from having a full voice in the academic community of their peers—thought of not as teachers, not as scholars, but simply as administrators.

We must make clear that in no way are we attempting to vilify freshman English directors. In fact, our experience is that by and large freshman English directors are generally supportive of center directors, especially since both program directors share mutual professional concerns. Rather, we interpret these survey data as indicative of the general perception of writing center directors within English departments. If anything, freshman English directors are probably more inclined to view center directors as fellow professionals than are typical faculty members who are not compositionists. And it is reasonable to assume that if freshman English directors have difficulty perceiving center directors as full colleagues, then non-composition faculty are even more likely to have trouble doing so.

## Joining the Professional Conversation

If the writing center is ever to accomplish what it is designed to accomplish, these perceptions of center directors need to change. Directors should no longer be isolated within the non-threatening four walls of a "lab." Their position should be redefined so that they are recognized as true members of the academic community: as teachers, scholars, and administrators.

This goal can be achieved in several ways, and most successfully so, with the input and support of freshman English directors. First, the writing center director should be required to be a rhetoric and composition specialist, a person well-versed in theory of and research in both composition and writing centers. Second, along with NCTE and the

National Writing Center Association (see Simpson), we believe the director should hold a tenure-track appointment and receive teaching credit for tutoring and training tutors, as well as release time for directing the center. Further, we believe that as a composition specialist, the director should participate fully in all aspects of the larger writing program, assisting in faculty development and policymaking. In fact, as a specialist in writing center administration, the director should be recognized as a co-equal of the freshman English director—both directors administering their own different but complementary writing programs.

The future of the writing center and the integrity of the larger writing program are directly linked to the professional status accorded their directors. In order to ensure that our programs are coherent and effective, we should more fully integrate the center into the larger writing program, and its director into the academic community. Writing centers can then become, as Stephen North suggests in *College English*, "centers of consciousness about writing on campus, a kind of physical locus" for an institution's "commitment to writing." This is a status, North says, "they can achieve" (446).

That is, we should add, if we allow them to.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>This lack of consensus is reflected in the diverse institutional settings of writing centers. To get a sense of the great variety of writing center programs and their administrative relationships to university writing programs, see Connolly and Vilardi, Haring-Smith, Hartzog, and especially Kail and Trimbur.

<sup>2</sup>For one of the finest theoretical rationales for the efficacy of peer tutoring and writing center pedagogy, see Bruffee. See Trimbur as well as an excellent bibliographical survey of collaborative learning theories ("Collaborative Learning").

<sup>3</sup>Murray and Bannister asked center directors to rank their daily responsibilities in order of frequency; teaching and tutoring ranked low on the scale, well below advertising center services, handling public relations, and developing instructional exercises (11). Not only are center directors not perceived as teachers, but evidently they do, in fact, spend most of their time and energy in routine administrative activities.

<sup>4</sup>In fact, it seems that directors are perceived more as *supervisors* than as *administrators*. For example, the respondents most often describe the directors' activities in terms associated with "supervision": *oversee, maintain, run, coordinate, serve, compile, schedule*. Such terms appear much more frequently than do terms associated with active administration: *establish, develop, create, determine*. Even the jargon of the field reinforces this attitude: center directors, for instance, do not "teach" but "train"; their "tutors" are called "staff" or "personnel"; their students are "clients" or "tutees."

<sup>5</sup>Over two-thirds of the center directors responding to Murray and Bannister's survey held nontenure track appointments (10).

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## Appendix

To determine how composition directors perceive the role of the writing center director, we distributed a questionnaire during the winter of 1988 to freshman English directors across the nation. Targeting a range of institutions from medium-small to large, we selected 275 of these institutions at random, making sure, however, that every state was represented. One hundred eighty-eight directors (68%) completed and returned the questionnaire.

The questionnaire (printed below) solicits data about the tasks and responsibilities of directing a writing center. It asks respondents to rate twenty items on a four-point scale from "essential" to "unimportant." This continuum enabled the directors to rate the importance of each item, giving us a sense of their priorities. More importantly, however, the directors' priorities allowed us to determine the relative level of status writing center directors have or are expected to have. The remaining questions solicit brief answers.

## Questionnaire

**DIRECTIONS:** The first 20 statements relate to activities and responsibilities of the writing center director. Please rate each one by checking the appropriate box. The remaining questions ask for brief answers.

	Essential	Important	Helpful	Unimportant
1. Recruits and hires tutors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Trains tutors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Publicizes center services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Has access to administrators beyond the English dept.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Maintains his or her own scholarship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Teaches courses in tutoring and composition pedagogy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Possesses strong communication skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Creates writing center policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Controls writing center budget	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Expresses policy in written documents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Stays current with pedagogical applications of computers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Conducts writing workshops for the university community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Familiarizes faculty with new developments in composition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Teaches writing courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Receives outstanding evaluations for his or her own classroom teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Monitors quality of staff's tutoring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Remains current with developments in the field	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Communicates regularly with composition director	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Communicates regularly with department chair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Remains accessible throughout the workday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## Questionnaire

(continued)

21. What important qualities and responsibilities are not listed on the previous page?

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22. Who should be the primary policymaker for the writing center?

- writing center director       freshman English director  
 department chair             other

23. What is the *most* important aspect of the writing center director's job? \_\_\_\_\_

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24. Should the center director be a trained composition specialist?

- yes       no       doesn't matter

25. Should the director participate in tutoring?

- yes       no

If so, how many hours per week? \_\_\_\_\_

26. What kind of appointment should the center director have?

- tenure track     non tenure track     staff     joint staff/faculty     other

27. Should the director have release time for directing the center?

- yes       no

If so, how much? \_\_\_\_\_

28. In your department, whom does the writing center director report to? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Teaching Writing in the Two-Year College

Helon Howell Raines

Two-year colleges are the largest single sector of higher education in the United States, enrolling more than half of all first-time freshmen and over forty percent of all undergraduates. A 1988 report from the Commission on the Future of Community Colleges also states that 1,224 accredited two-year colleges serve over five million college credit students and that at least one-third of those responding to a national survey of community college students indicated that their primary reason for enrolling in a community college was to prepare to transfer to a four-year school.<sup>1</sup> The significance of community college English departments is apparent if approximately one half of college students take composition in two-year colleges. Similarities and differences between community college writing programs and those in other areas of higher education need to be explored if we are to understand more about the teaching and learning of writing.

Two-year-college professionals note with dismay the infrequent and limited attention paid their institutions. For instance, in a presentation at the 1987 ADE Eastern Summer Seminar (published in the Spring, 1988, *ADE Bulletin*), Sylvia Holladay expresses concern about the Conference on the Future of Doctoral Study in English. She observes that, while the papers mentioned all other levels of writing instruction, "the participants in the conference seem unaware that two-year colleges exist" (ADE 51). This lack of attention may be due to the fact that most community college instructors' first allegiance probably is to the group Stephen North describes as "practitioners" whose principal mode of inquiry is practice and whose form of knowledge is lore (North 22). As North points out, lore receives little attention from scholars and researchers. Nonetheless, North's argument for the re-establishment of practitioners as the "center of the field's knowledge-making explosion" is one of several signs that composition studies may begin to value more the work of those who have been on the fringes of the writing/teaching community (371). Full participation by representatives of two-year colleges, as well as elementary and secondary teachers, in the English Coalition is another of these signs. Other examples include the success of the journal *Teaching English in the Two-Year College*, the establishment of committees on two-year schools within professional organizations such as ADE and CCCC, the NCTE regional conferences for two-year schools, and the encouragement of

two-year college professionals to discuss their work at meetings and submit their findings to journals. These pieces of a larger picture are perhaps best framed by an increasing emphasis on articulation and dialogue within the entire community of teachers of writing.

This article provides information which will suggest differences in the contexts in which writing courses are taught in two-year colleges as compared to four-year colleges and universities. Such a discussion will necessarily examine the way the very term "writing programs" is used in two-year colleges as well as examining the structure of those programs. The purpose of the article is to promote understanding of two-year college contexts in order to foster improved dialogue among teachers at all types of institutions.

## Problems of Definition

When first invited to participate in a Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association special session on writing programs, my response was that we didn't have a writing program at Casper College. After thinking about it, I decided that the number and variety of writing courses and students were reason enough to consider part of our department a writing program. However, my initial response made me question exactly why I hadn't envisioned a writing program at Casper College and whether my view was unique. Those questions, as well as the need to broaden my knowledge about other two-year colleges, led me to conduct a telephone survey of eight community colleges.<sup>2</sup> In addition, ten members of the Casper College faculty who teach primarily writing also completed a questionnaire. Because of discussions following two presentations based primarily on that initial survey, I designed a second survey to which I have received responses from two hundred thirty junior, technical/vocational, and transfer-only two-year schools located in forty-seven states.<sup>3</sup> From my interpretation of these materials, I conclude that the term "writing program" is not the one most frequently used to discuss writing courses in two-year colleges. Several reasons may explain this phenomenon.

## Writing as the Focus of an English Program

In most community colleges, the people who teach writing also are the people who teach literature, and so, we see ourselves as a program in English where we teach *primarily* writing and a little literature. In fact, if I use Yeats' poem "The Second Coming" as a metaphor for higher education, people in two-year programs would say that in their English Departments the center *is* writing and that center has held in the past and will hold in the future. Actually, for a long time many of us were unaware

that anarchy had been loosed upon the profession since we have experienced no breach between literature faculty and writing faculty because the writing teachers *are* the literature teachers. In addition, our departments are often so small that English teachers also may teach speech or journalism, or foreign language teachers may offer a section or two of composition.

Second, we don't see our programs as writing programs because, although we teach primarily writing, we do not teach these courses as part of an English major or writing emphasis curriculum. Rather, we teach both writing and literature courses to a cross-section of students in the college. Writing courses, then, may be housed in a Division of Humanities or Languages and Literature, along with foreign languages, speech, and journalism.

## Purposes of English Programs

Common responses to the survey questions about the purpose of writing programs suggest that teachers in two-year colleges emphasize writing as a service skill. Although the survey responses demonstrated that two-year college purposes are multiple and diverse, three "service skill" purposes were designated most frequently: 1) academic discourse, to prepare students to write for other courses and/or for transfer degree programs; 2) technical or business writing, to prepare students for employment and to advance professionally or to satisfy requirements in terminal degree programs; and 3) developmental courses to improve basic skills. While a few respondents articulated a responsibility to help writers develop expressive writing or writing for life-long learning, most demonstrated the strongest commitment to the service component of their department's work. While having varied purposes does not necessarily weaken the accomplishments of the programs, it does perhaps blur our vision of our identity. However, all respondents were very clear that their English programs are anchored in what most teach most of the time, writing. This focus is verified by the courses offered within these programs.

While the majority of the 230 colleges responding to the survey offer Freshman Composition I and II, plus at least one level of basic writing, technical writing and creative writing, fewer than ten per cent offer advanced composition, honors writing courses, or sophomore composition. Nonetheless, randomly choosing seventy-five of the surveys from comprehensive colleges only, I found that three-fourths offer at least five different writing courses. On the other hand, fewer than forty percent of the same schools offer more than five literature courses. In addition, as is true of most colleges, the vast majority of students are in writing courses,

with composition sections accounting for most of these. Definitely the focus of English departments in two-year colleges is on writing.

Furthermore, the focus of two-year college faculty is on teaching. Of the responses to questions about teaching loads, the average number of writing classes taught per term per faculty is three while the average number of all classes is five. Since the average number of writing students per section is between twenty and twenty five, most English Department faculty teach between 60 and 75 students in writing courses per term.

In addition to similarities in curriculum and in teaching loads, a strong similarity in administration also exists. Among the eight schools surveyed by telephone, six of these report that writing and English are a discrete unit which is part of a larger division of Humanities or Languages and Literature. Two of the colleges have a Writing Coordinator who volunteers for the position and is given a slight load reduction. Two others of the eight do have a Chair of English or a Coordinator of Writing. All eight colleges also report that committees decide major departmental issues. Often the English Chair or Writing Coordinator is responsible for organizing meetings, for developing in-service training and perhaps for setting schedules. Budgets, final personnel decisions, and liaison to top administration are responsibilities of Division Heads. A few very small schools even settle budgets, schedules, and detailed administrative matters by committee.

In the larger sample, the responses reflected similar structures to those already described. For instance, seventy-eight percent of the colleges surveyed have a chair or a head of a division that includes English. Only six per cent indicated that they had a Writing Program Director or Coordinator. About one half of those responding to a question on the way administrative decisions were made indicated that they work primarily by committee. Furthermore, narrative descriptions of administration revealed a high percentage of faculty involvement in curriculum and program decisions.

## Reasons for This Structure

The reasons for structures that have few administrators and give significant representation to faculty are fairly apparent. First, the number of people teaching in a program make administration by committee feasible. In addition, of course, none of us has graduate students, so we have few inexperienced teachers to supervise. In fact, the most obvious reason for administration by representation is the age and experience of the majority of community college faculty. Information from the extended

survey indicates that sixty per cent of the faculty in English Departments are between forty and fifty, and seventy-three per cent have over ten years of experience, almost identical figures reported for all community college faculty by the Commission on the Future of Community Colleges (12). An older, more experienced faculty does not want, need, nor will it tolerate, excessive supervision.

## Democratized Administration and Decentralized Structures

While faculty in my division believe it is an advantage to have fewer administrators, we also sometimes feel we are overloaded with administrative responsibilities. Adding administrative hours to a heavy teaching load makes it difficult to find time to design and implement new programs, particularly if committees do not have adequate power to gain acceptance for decisions. In addition, when the Division Head is from an area other than English, programs that committees or individuals devise simply may never come into existence. It is discouraging to find that among community colleges where the administrative arrangements are so frequently cross-disciplinary, only twenty-seven percent of over two hundred responding to the question indicated that they have a writing-across-the-curriculum program. Almost all, however, indicated they were anxious to develop this area.

Directing by committee does satisfy the faculty desire for control of curriculum and autonomy in decision-making. Indeed, in those schools with strong committees, faculty members are truly represented in the decision-making process, a process which is minimally hierarchical and authoritarian. Everyone at least has a voice if she wishes to use it.

Closely related to more democratized administrations are the decentralized structures in many community colleges. In a program such as the one at Casper College, which does not have common course outlines or texts, committees determine only a minimal set of guidelines for composition classes. For instance, we recommend that students write 5,000 to 10,000 words per semester, but some instructors may require ten, two-page essays while others have four or five papers that arise from strategies such as developing and organizing ideas, multiple drafts and written and oral critiques from other students.

One concern, then, is that students cannot move readily from one instructor to the other where there is so much diversity in texts, methods and course structure. And the students may be confused when exposed to many different methods, going, let's say, from a process-oriented classroom to a product-centered course. Some faculty, however, claim

this variety in approach is actually an advantage. Indeed, when we compare notes at Casper College, we find in general that students seem to improve from course to course in the composition sequence regardless of the approach used by the previous instructor. Furthermore, our faculty thoroughly enjoy and appreciate autonomy in course preparation and curriculum design.

However, although the abbreviated recommendations for conducting freshman composition courses may work well with an experienced faculty, they do not provide any focus for a cohesive writing program or even for a unified composition sequence. This fact may explain why so few schools in the survey claimed a theoretical basis for their entire program. The two or three schools whose purposes suggest a theoretical structure were all larger urban schools that also employed a high percentage of adjunct faculty. The absence of a carefully considered theory or theories in two-year colleges can be a limitation for both the program and for the faculty. The advantages of autonomy may be overshadowed if practice is based solely on random choice.

## The Two-Year College Mission

Because of the mission of community colleges, these institutions emphasize excellence in teaching more than success in research. However, the lack of prestige given to two-year teaching institutions often is reflected in the way we are funded by legislatures. Limited budgets restrict travel money, sabbaticals, in-service training programs and other forms of professional development. Heavy teaching loads also mean that even those who are interested in doing research may not and therefore often do not articulate to the wider community what practitioners discover, investigate and create. However, many of my colleagues believe the emphasis on teaching, even to the exclusion of research, is a strength. Many feel more effective without the stress of publishing. Nonetheless, more dissemination of practitioner knowledge would serve the whole teaching community.

Many advantages exist for teaching and learning in the two-year college. The priority given to teaching has significant implications. The freedom to experiment without being bound into a rigid program usually is positive since it means we can spontaneously make changes without waiting for departmental approval. As long as we don't end up with random disorder and meaningless chaos that would weaken the strong teaching center, this diversity is positive. And the diversity does lend itself to experimentation, even among the most conservative. As one colleague says, whenever you teach large numbers of students, survival becomes the mother of invention. Faculty in community colleges often

believe that the writing instruction students receive with experienced teachers may be superior to instruction in large colleges and universities which employ less experienced teaching assistants, teaching fellows and adjunct faculty and where the professorial staff teach writing infrequently, reluctantly, and sometimes ineffectively. Furthermore, we do take pride in our teaching, and we think more times than not we do a good job. Overall, I believe it is fair to say that if the beast is slouching toward Bethlehem, we either are too far from Bethlehem to care or we just don't recognize a beast when we see one.

What, then, is the future for the community college English Department and what effect does the community college writing program have on the University program? Overall, I think the future is good, although I must admit some "images...trouble my vision." On the bright side, we have for some time had the newest market in college enrollment, the older student. Most of these people are motivated and dedicated, and I believe their presence in growing numbers in our regular day classes improves the performance of our younger, more typically disinterested, 18 year olds. I believe that universities will see well-prepared students emerging from community college programs, at least those where teachers have reasonable teaching loads.

On the other hand, according to the Community College Commission, "Within the next twelve years, approximately 40 percent of all community college faculty who now teach will retire" (12). This situation certainly could have damaging effects on two-year colleges since the best and the best-educated graduate students probably will teach in four-year schools and universities. Because we failed to secure a large number of Ph.D.'s and A.B.D.'s in English when they were more readily available, we are unlikely to get them in the future. It also is unlikely that we will secure many new faculty with formal education in composition and rhetoric. Furthermore, it is possible that some four-year schools may hire away from the community college to augment their faculty. Many schools are planning for the loss of experienced faculty with programs to insure continued excellent teaching.

## Effect of the Emphasis on Composition and Rhetoric

Finally, the new emphasis on scholarship in composition and rhetoric seems to be both positive and negative for two-year colleges. It has brought more attention to what we have long known: the most important work in the academy is in the classroom with people who are attempting to develop reading, writing, and critical abilities. However, as

already discussed, even though community college writing faculty most frequently are excellent and experienced teachers and even though many do devise innovative and effective methods for teaching more to more students, we infrequently publish or promote our findings. Since we are primarily concerned with the practical rather than the theoretical, we have not developed the language with which to disseminate what we know. Without the power to name, without the power to create an impressive language for what we do and what we know, our work may seem less impressive. Of course, we understand that without naming things precisely, we may not do the thing as precisely as we should. However, over the years, my colleagues and I have reflected that what we frequently have done under one name is now being touted with a new label: group activity is collaborative learning; reading papers in class is publishing; working with sentence structures is sentence combining; evaluating files of revised papers is looking at a portfolio. And these, of course, are mild examples of my point. When our texts are dominated by "dialogics," "heuristics," and "hegemonies," the profession may be consciously or unconsciously creating a language of exclusion.

## Enhancing the Dialogue

For a dialogue to exist, colleges and universities must first recognize that students who have taken composition in good community college writing programs are being well-served by those programs. Furthermore, the instructors in two-year colleges must be respected as equals, people who teach in programs that are significant to the overall work of the writing community. If two-year college instructors are given full status in the writing community, we will enrich the endeavor. If we are excluded from the club or made second-class citizens, the entire profession suffers. The ironies and implications of this point are compounded in a field which itself is often marginalized in the larger academic community.

I would like to suggest several specific ways to enhance the dialogue. One way is to increase what already is being done in collaborative projects between university and community college faculty. In the community college, we deal directly with numerous and diverse writing students. Our opportunities to collect data and to observe and interpret that data from an experienced perspective in collaboration with those in universities who have more expertise in theory, less demanding teaching loads and more access to grants should produce significant scholarship. This collaboration also should extend to faculty exchange programs between community colleges and universities, a system which we are exploring with the University of Wyoming/Casper College Center. I applaud Sylvia Holladay's suggestion that universities consider a newer model for teaching assistants that would relieve them of teaching and

studying at the same time. Such a program would include internships, many of which could be carried out in community colleges (53,54).

Finally, one way we can improve the value of the community college program to the university is by presenting our material at conferences. Having the opportunity to talk to writing teachers and administrators as equals may lead to more collaboration, but, more importantly, it surely will lead to an enriched community of writing teachers. In addition to such presentations, more publication of the work of community college faculty in journals which reach beyond the community college audience also could develop an extensive and substantial dialogue. Sharing information surely is one good way to "maintain our passion" and to "increase our conviction" for the thing we all attempt to do—helping others discover and express meaning through writing. Sharing also is one more way to keep writing at the center of all levels of higher education.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>This information comes from *Building Communities*, "Foreword," vii and 37. The transfer figure cited here is lower than Sylvia Holladay reports for Florida where 80% plan to transfer and 62% actually do. At Casper College, a recent survey indicated that 85% plan to continue their education at a four-year school and 60% of our graduates are in a transfer program.

<sup>2</sup>These colleges included the College of Alameda in San Francisco, Edison Community College in Fort Myers, Florida, Hutchinson Community College in Hutchinson, Kansas, Prince Georges Community College in Prince Georges, Maryland, J. Sargeant Reynolds in Richmond, Virginia, Northwest Community College in Powell, Wyoming, Western Wyoming in Rock Springs, Wyoming, and Casper College.

<sup>3</sup>Alaska no longer has a community college system. The states which are not represented are Idaho, Louisiana, Vermont, and West Virginia.

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## ***In Situ* Workshops and the Peer Relationships of Composition Faculty**

Rebecca M. Howard

Recounting his experiences at Michigan Tech, Toby Fulwiler notes that a writing-across-the-curriculum program must begin with cross-curricular faculty support (113). But as he details the problems he faced, Fulwiler does not comment upon the difficulty of gaining this support in the face of institutional traditions which view composition instruction as remedial or at best normative, composition students as the unfortunates who do not meet institutional standards, and composition teachers as miscellaneous literati unable to secure jobs teaching literature. Facing these obstacles at our institution, Colgate University, the new writing program found *in situ* workshops—wherein a writing professor offers occasional composition instruction in courses across the curriculum—a valuable tool for teaching composition strategies to students and composition philosophy to their professors.

When the new writing program was beginning at Colgate, the faculty, administrators, and students characteristically discussed writing instruction as the correction of error, in terms consonant with the rhetoric of liberal culture or current-traditionalist rhetoric (see Berlin 36-46). Many assumed composition to be best taught through the indirect agency of literature instruction. They advocated restricting direct composition instruction to the cultivation of genius in selective “advanced” classes taught by literature professors or to the correction of errors in “remedial” classes taught by adjuncts. Meanwhile, our new writing program undertook to build a diverse pedagogy, including composition classes available to all students as well as writing instruction incorporated into syllabi across the curriculum. Gaining support for such a curriculum required that we challenge the dominant model of writing instruction as remedial error correction and offer instead an epistemic model of writing as an academic discipline whose instruction can sharpen the learning and communications skills of all writers, facilitating their interactions with professorial readers, assigned texts, and their own belief-systems.

Although cross-curricular faculty workshops have become a staple of writing across the curriculum, they are not an effective opening move in such a campaign. We were concerned, first of all, that faculty workshops would provide an environment in which disagreements would become

entrenched. In addition, especially in a young program, writing faculty need to learn from their colleagues as much as they need to teach them, but the environment of the cross-curricular faculty workshop generally assumes writing faculty to be teachers and their colleagues learners. Yet another obstacle to early faculty workshops is that professors in the various disciplines must be willing to attend the workshops and be taught new concepts, which is hardly likely in the environment of liberal-culture and current-traditionalist rhetoric. Most problematically, that environment of liberal culture and current-traditionalism was not one in which writing faculty were esteemed peers. Corollary to the vision of writing instruction as a mechanical exercise was the tendency to characterize writing instructors—those who taught the “remedial” classes—as mechanics.

For these writing faculty to initiate curricular change and urge a new institutional vision of composition instruction required their gaining credibility among their peers. Replacing a mechanistic vision of writing instruction with an intellectual one required that writing professors themselves be regarded by other faculty members as intellectuals not mechanics.

This is an indelicate issue to raise in the pages of an academic journal. Yet because ours is surely not the only writing program to encounter these problems, it behooves writing program administrators to develop practical models for demonstrating the academic integrity of the discipline of composition and its faculty. Elaine P. Maimon declares the “first job of the WPA” to be promoting the scholarly exchange that enables curricular change: “Conversation about writing is a prerequisite for a program of writing across the curriculum” (10). Since it is the writing faculty, however, who must instigate that conversation, perhaps an even more preliminary job of the WPA is to demonstrate that the writing faculty are participants in an academic discipline.

In our program we needed a subtle way of communicating new ideas about ourselves, our discipline, and our pedagogy. Our first step was sufficiently successful that I now offer it as a technique for placing writing faculty in a position to promote the heuristic value of composition instruction: *in situ* writing workshops—offering composition instruction in “content” courses across the curriculum, not just in scientific and technical subjects. Many writing programs have already demonstrated that *in situ* pedagogy teaches students distilled principles of composition and facilitates more productive use of the writing center (Covington, et al.; Griffin; Haviland; North). But this pedagogy extends past the students to include their professors as well. The experience at our institution suggests *in situ* writing instruction as a forum for subtle, non-confrontational modification of colleagues’ ideas about writing

instruction and instructors—the crucial first step from a writing program on the fringes of the academy toward a centrally involved program of writing across the curriculum. To enable our workshops to accomplish this dual purpose, we have developed certain procedures for their conduct, as well as general tenets, principles by which we conduct them.

## Procedures

### (1) The invitation

Our *in situ* instruction begins with a written invitation issued each semester to all faculty: a writing professor will visit any class to teach principles of composition applicable to an assigned paper or an essay test. Instead of asking colleagues to attend a workshop in which they will themselves be instructed, the *in situ* invitation volunteers instruction to colleagues’ students. Thus writing faculty are established as helpful rather than demanding colleagues. And because the *in situ* opportunity comes in the form of an invitation, no unwilling professors are forced to participate. The writing program, therefore, receives no complaints.

The successful invitation must detail certain information:

a. Types of workshops that have been offered in the past, with the suggestion that the writing professor will work to adapt these to the individual class. This reassures course professors that they need not have their own inventive ideas about what should take place in the workshop.

b. An indication that the writing professors are ready and willing to devise new kinds of workshops for course professors who want them. This indicates that the workshops are not a stale dog-and-pony show, and it also invites colleagues to be imaginative about what might work well in their classes.

c. The procedure for requesting a workshop, so that no one worries about what to say in a phone call or note.

d. The explanation that the *in situ* workshops are part of the routine of the writing program; otherwise, course professors hesitate to impose upon their colleagues. (We have experimented with *in situ* instruction as part of our service component and as part of the teaching component and have found the latter far more satisfactory. Once the *in situ* program becomes established, the demand for workshops is too heavy to be met imaginatively and energetically by faculty who are already teaching a full load. Therefore, we give load credit for *in situ* instruction.)



## (2) Caveats and Cautions

a. Because we have found that students pay greatest attention if the principles being taught are pertinent not just to their writing in general but also to their grade for the course, we give presentations only when they are tied to an assignment. Some faculty will initially ask for context-free instruction but then agree to have it linked to an assignment.

b. In addition, our presentations take place only in regular class meetings, with the professor present (some colleagues hope the writing professor will act as substitute teacher while they are out of town); otherwise, the *in situ* dialogue would reach the students but not the course professor. Our written and oral conversations with colleagues discreetly focus on the students' benefits from *in situ* instruction, yet the course professors are, in fact, an important part of the workshop audience (as, indeed, are the writing professors themselves).

## (3) Planning the session

Usually faculty ask that we help discern what type of workshop would be best for their students. Sometimes the answer comes from the type of assignment given in the class, such as a laboratory report. Our most common types of workshop, however, are more generic:

- a. Analyzing the assignment and developing a thesis
- b. Developing logical evidence
- c. Organizing the essay
- d. Stylistics

We have conducted successful workshops on prewriting before an assignment is due. For almost any other topic, however, the workshop often functions best when it takes place after an assignment has been turned in. Then we use anonymous writing samples supplied by the course professor and distributed to all the class members, who are led through techniques for revising their prose. This is most effective when the course professor then offers the students an opportunity for a graded revision.

Stylistics workshops are the most troublesome. Faculty will ask us to teach students a specific stylistic or mechanical technique, such as how to use the apostrophe or how to achieve parallel construction, but it is difficult to conduct a lively workshop on such topics. Our customary response, therefore, is to explore other possibilities with the professor. The relation of transitional devices to the thesis, for example, always animates the students. Using anonymous prose samples, in the

workshop the writing professor asks the students to establish the logical relationship between each sentence and the thesis and to suggest ways of making that relationship clear.

## (4) Conducting the workshop

Most of our "workshops" are actually discussions wherein the writing professor explains a principle or set of principles and then begins posing problems for the students to solve, problems involving their own writing, typically in their anonymous prose samples. Identifying and classifying thesis and evidence, for example, are usually successful in involving the whole class, even when the writing professor finds herself in a classroom full of reticent students. It is important for this type of workshop that the writing professor not over-prepare. The workshop should challenge the students to identify the issues and explore options, rather than having the writing professor point out one example after another of the principle in question.

The extent to which the course professor is involved in the preparation for the workshop and in the conduct of the workshop itself can vary widely from one workshop to another. Some professors feel most comfortable as observers to the procedures; others will stand with the writing professor in the front of the classroom and join in fielding questions and leading discussion. The writing professor planning the workshop must be sensitive to the inclinations of the course professor while encouraging the most active role that he or she is willing to adopt.

## Principles

Our experience has demonstrated three tenets essential for the success of *in situ* workshops that not only offer meaningful instruction to the students but also promote mutual respect between writing professor and course professor: scholarly context, theoretical integrity, and collegial approach.

First, *in situ* writing instruction, while focusing on a specific writing event or assignment, must also address its general scholarly context, the context of communication among scholars. Otherwise, the instruction would be only a service tutorial for the assignment, and not discipline-based instruction. A workshop on essay introductions, for example, explains the structural elements of the introduction and also discusses their rhetorical context, the conversation between student writer and professorial reader. Both students and faculty respond positively to the workshop that depicts the act of academic writing as a learning experience and its written product as a communication from one scholar to

another, one human being to another, rather than as a fiery hoop through which the obedient dog jumps at the trainer's command.

Second, while the workshops are offered in cooperation with and at the behest of the course professor, they must maintain theoretical integrity, that is, be couched in a rhetoric consonant with the aims of the writing program. This theoretical framework must not, however, be proposed as a competitor with but as a modification of or even companion to the course professor's own views. Our epistemic writing program, for example, depicts the students' goals in academic writing as intellectual growth and personal satisfaction with that growth. As we began our *in situ* workshops, I was concerned that colleagues in the departments might not share this vision but might, on the contrary, adopt an approach like that of Les Perelman: "... a student doesn't need to believe what he or she writes, but only needs to give the appearance of believing it" (474). Fortunately, although I have heard this idea from students (the familiar "give-the-professor-what-he-wants-to-hear" approach), I have never heard it from colleagues. As I offer my vision of the scholarly enterprise as an interaction of one's own ideas with those of others, the course professors characteristically enter into the conversation eagerly, adding their own perspectives about the scholarly stance crucial to successful academic writing. The students are intimidated by the prospect of making their academic writing more than a ceremony and allowing their academic endeavors to influence their personal beliefs; many students do, indeed, labor under the conviction that their academic writing needs no conviction. But as they come to realize that their professors' ambition for them is not limited to mere restatement of others' beliefs, they willingly begin the transition. And as we explore these ideas in the workshops, we professors may be reformulating and clarifying our ambitions for the students.

Finally, writing professors conducting these workshops must foster a collegial approach, exchanging expertise with colleagues rather than thrusting ideas upon them. When we first began *in situ* teaching, I braced myself for opposition from the knowledge-as-information adherents described by Knoblauch and Brannon: "Instructors both in English and other fields often assume that knowledge is a stable and bounded artifact, a collection of information, a set of facts and ideas to be delivered to students through lectures and course readings" (467). I have, indeed, conducted *in situ* workshops for professors who teach solely by the lecture-and-assigned-reading method; but none have expressed anything but approbation for my process-based vision of writing and learning. Apparently they see no conflict between my epistemology and theirs. And certainly I make no effort to persuade them that a conflict does exist. Nor do I try to change their point of view. If a colleague asks my opinion, I give it. But I do not tell any professor that I consider his or her opinion

wrong. The greatest mistake that a writing program could make would be to polarize the faculty into two armed camps: the information-based versus the process-based. Many teachers do, indeed, "preserve notions about the nature of knowledge and learning which limit their ability to recognize the heuristic value of composition" (Knoblauch and Brannon 467). In our composition theory it is important that we recognize this truth. But in our program development it is important that we effect change diplomatically. When we encounter epistemologies apparently in conflict with our own, we must not thereby assume ourselves in a corollary conflict with their holders. On the contrary, we must question the extent to which the epistemologies are actually in conflict: are process and information really polar opposites, for example, or are they points on a continuum, goals that may even be encompassed to varying degrees in one sane theory of education?

As the new writing program at Colgate develops, increasing numbers of our colleagues at this liberal-arts institution are asking writing professors' opinions on pedagogical matters. Finding us open-minded and willing to learn, they are responding in kind. Greater numbers of faculty in the other disciplines are coming to see writing faculty not as technicians from the Academic Fixit Shop but as full participants in (and sometimes enablers of) the liberal arts traditions. They are increasingly willing to set aside counterproductive visions of writing instruction as inherently normative or remedial. They are realizing that writing faculty have a content for their instruction—that we are working from a disciplinary base, the discipline of composition, which itself facilitates learning in the other disciplines of the university. We have striven to be good listeners, willing learners, and tactful teachers, and we have earned increased respect from our peers. We are gaining support for a full-scale program of writing across the curriculum, including faculty workshops and innovative curriculum development.

Although these changes are gradual, far from completed and subject to predictable setbacks, they are nevertheless taking place. A writing-across-the-curriculum program must begin with the faculty, and *in situ* pedagogy can provide for pedagogical cooperation between writing faculty and their colleagues, establishing the mutual respect necessary for subsequent mutual endeavors. *In situ* workshops are a concrete model for implementing the principles described in Joseph F. Trimmer's "Rhetoric of Compromise" for writing program development:

1. To recognize that faculty members will change only when they can transfer their commitment from an original image to a more compelling image.

2. To show our understanding of and respect for that original position by restating it in terms faculty find acceptable.
3. To explore possible compromises between contending positions. (17)

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## Writing Across the Curriculum: The Program at Third College, University of California, San Diego

Gesa Kirsch

In the last decade, many new writing-across-the-curriculum (WAC) programs have emerged in universities across the country. Two kinds of programs are typical: one integrates writing into discipline-specific courses with faculty in all disciplines teaching writing; the other offers courses for different majors with faculty in English as teachers. Both kinds of programs are usually offered at the upper-division level. In this article, I describe a third kind of writing-across-the-curriculum program—in place at the University of California, San Diego—one that is implemented at the lower-division level and has, to our knowledge, unique features. Here, I report on the program's design and administration, summarize how students assess the program, and discuss administrative issues particular to the program.

In order to differentiate the program at UCSD from the two more typical ones, I will briefly examine each program's assumptions about writing and learning. (For a fuller description of "the two philosophical approaches to writing across the curriculum" (19) see Susan McLeod's recent article "Defining Writing Across the Curriculum.") The one kind of WAC program integrates writing into discipline-specific courses, assuming that faculty across the disciplines can best assess and teach writing typical in their field because they are experts, engaged in the research and debates of their field. The other kind of WAC program, usually taught exclusively by English faculty who offer writing courses with a focus on discipline-specific discourse, assumes that English teachers, because of their training in interpretation, discourse analysis, and rhetorical theory are best qualified to analyze and teach writing in the disciplines.

Despite the different assumptions about who best teaches writing, the two types of WAC programs share the premise that writing can enhance learning. Yet, exactly how writing can contribute to learning is disputed by composition scholars. As Anne Herrington argues, definitions of "writing to learn" tend to fall into two categories: "the perspective of a school community" and "the perspective of a disciplinary community" ("Classrooms" 404). The former perspective, Herrington explains,

encourages expressive, exploratory writing in order to engage students in thinking processes relevant to different disciplines. The latter perspective encourages more formal writing, assuming that by writing in and about their disciplines, students learn about current issues in their field, learn the reasoning processes whereby members of the discipline identify problems and go about researching them, and finally learn the conventions that govern written work in different disciplines.

## The Design of the Program

Against this background of other WAC programs, I will now describe the program in place at Third College, University of California, San Diego and contrast its assumptions about learning, teaching, and writing with that of other programs. The program at UCSD combines the two perspectives described by Herrington. Writing is "used as a medium for students to engage in the *process* of thinking" (Herrington, "Classrooms" 404) and to anticipate future academic writing, the approach characterized by Herrington as the "perspective of the school community." Writing also familiarizes students with the "kinds of issues that the discipline considers it important to try to resolve [and] the lines of reasoning used to resolve those issues" ("Classrooms" 405), the approach Herrington calls the "perspective of a disciplinary community." Such a combination of perspectives, according to Herrington, provides "a more adequate approach" [than either of the two approaches separately] because it "recogniz[es] that a classroom is situated at once in both school and disciplinary communities" ("Classrooms" 405).

The program at UCSD is unusual, though not unique, in that it is integrated at the lower-division, general-education level. Some institutions have begun implementing WAC at the lower-level division. C. W. Griffin reports in a recent survey of WAC programs, by offering "'linked' or 'coregistered' course[s], where students enroll for a writing course linked with another required course" [401]. At UCLA and the University of Washington, for example, writing adjunct courses exist at the lower-level division, yet they are different from UCSD's program in two important ways: students earn separate units and separate grades for those courses, both of which is not the case with the courses at UCSD. (For a fuller description of UCLA's program, see Robert Cullen's article in the *ADE Bulletin*, Spring 1985.)

Officially called the Third College Societal Analysis Writing Adjuncts Program, the program at UCSD was established in the fall of 1985. It is taught in connection with up to 13 general-education courses in four areas: Third World Studies, History, Communications, and Urban Studies and Planning. Most students take these courses in their

sophomore year, after they have had a two-quarter sequence of freshman writing. The Societal Analysis courses are structured like many introductory, lower-division courses: they have three weekly lecture hours, given by the professor in the discipline, and one hour of discussion, led by a teaching assistant, a doctoral student in the field. All students take a mid-term and a final exam, read about 80 pages of course material a week, and write an average of two papers for the course.

Students who sign up for writing sections in order to complete Third College's Writing Adjunct requirement engage in a pattern of work different from that of other students in the course. Students in writing sections are required to attend two additional weekly hours of writing sections, taught by specially trained teaching assistants (TAs). These teaching assistants, like their counterparts leading the regular discussion sections, are doctoral students in the discipline of the course. They are selected for their extensive and successful teaching experience and are trained by a composition specialist (see "Administrative Issues" for more details about the training). In the writing sections, students engage in a range of activities: they discuss course material from the lectures and the readings, they do in-class writing tasks, work in pairs to critique each others' drafts, and collaborate in small groups in order to synthesize course material and present their findings to the class. Students usually write additional and longer papers than in regular sections, as well as many informal, short writing assignments. They receive 6 instead of 4 units for the course and earn one cumulative grade.

In some sections, students are also asked to respond to academic journal questions about the readings. For example, students in Comparative Urban Studies and Planning may be asked to respond to journal tasks like the following:

*Journal 1.* Reread and annotate Chapter 6 in the book by Ivan Light (*Cities in World Perspective*), paying particular attention to the description of modernization and dependency theories. For this journal entry, draw a vertical line through the middle of a piece of paper, writing modernization theory on the top left and dependency theory on the top right. Underneath each heading, list the causes each theory proposes to explain Third World overurbanization. Once you've compiled this list, write a paragraph comparing and contrasting modernization theory with dependency theory.

*Journal 2.* Reread and annotate Chapter 19 in Abu-Lughod and Hay's book (*Third World Urbanization*). List the different effects of overurbanization that shape the life of the Jakarta street trader, such as under- and unemployment, lack of educational opportunities, social structures, and legal aspects. Using the list you just generated, write a page illustrating the effects of overurbanization with examples from the life of the Jakarta street trader.

The first journal task helps students understand that in many disciplines there exist competing theories. By listing the elements of two theories

next to each other, and then writing about these elements, students have a means of comparing, analyzing, and assessing the value of each theory. The second journal task requires students to reconstruct and examine the case studies they have read about. Using examples from case studies to illustrate the effects of overurbanization, students may see how theories and examples are related. Such examples and cases are essential in writing convincingly about concepts of urbanization. By writing about specific cases, students build up a ready store of illustrations they can use to support extended arguments. For example, students can make use of cases recorded in journal entries when asked to respond to the following task, a more formal essay assignment completed in class:

Write an essay explaining the causes of Third World overurbanization and describing its effects. Imagine a reader who knows enough to realize there are problems with Third World cities but needs help in analyzing their causes or characteristics.

In explaining the causes, use material you have read in Light's book (chapter 6, "Modernization and Dependency Theory"), in the Soft Reserve articles (Abu-Lughod & Hay, chapters 9 & 10), and material you have heard in lecture (colonialism, the rise of capitalism, industrialization).

In describing the effects of overurbanization, you should try to describe categories or kinds of effects and then, for each kind of effect, give examples drawn from several case studies.

You might begin by defining "overurbanization," then move to discussing its causes, and finally describe its effects. To understand the causes and effects of overurbanization, your reader will need many specific examples and concrete details.

Other writing assignments for the Urban Studies and Planning course—assignments completed by all students whether or not they are in the special writing sections—include two essays based on first-hand field research and a final cumulative project that requires the application of theories discussed in lectures to the findings from the field research.

As the examples above illustrate, students in the writing sections are asked to write in a variety of discourse types and in varying degrees of formality. Instructors are encouraged to assign a range of writing because research shows that different types of writing make different demands on writers (see Langer and Appleby, 130-151; Britton, et al. 175-203). Furthermore, as Susan Peck MacDonald, the composition specialist who coordinates all writing sections, explains in her *Report on the First Year* of the program, "writing allows [students] the repeated rehearsals, the opportunity to apply concepts, and the opportunities to gain feedback that are critical to their mastering . . . new ways of thinking" (6). MacDonald classifies "three facets of academic thinking which are crucial to the academy and yet very difficult for the beginning

undergraduate student: 1. perceiving arguments as arguments, 2. using evidence, and 3. perceiving and using varying codes in appropriate contexts" (6). The range of writing that students engage in and the support they receive throughout their writing process in the adjunct courses are designed to foster students' facility with academic discourse, to help them overcome the difficulties described above, and to encourage them to learn course material and synthesize knowledge through writing.

In a memo to the Third College Curriculum and Academic Affairs Committee, Cooper and MacDonald outline some of the program standards:

- a. Writing must be viewed as a means of learning and of participating in the discipline under study, not solely as an instrument for testing what has been learned.
- b. Students must meet regularly with their instructors for tutorials on work in progress.
- c. There must be ample class time for TAs to work with students on alternatives for organizing their writing. . . . [Students] may then need to spend at least 1 hour of classroom time in peer workshops.
- d. Students must be required to revise key assignments. Revisions must involve reconceptualizing, reorganizing, and adding material—not merely correcting spelling and punctuation.
- e. Students must keep an Academic Journal in which they write regularly (preferably daily) about assigned readings. . . . [Journals] must be designed to teach the strategies of inquiry, reading, and writing in a discipline; and they must prepare students for major assignments.
- f. TAs' major writing assignments must be discussed with the SAWA Coordinator and revised with care so that students understand what is being asked of them and have a good chance of succeeding at it.

## Students' Evaluation of the Program

After the first year, MacDonald surveyed students, asking them about their learning and writing experience in the new program. Here is what she reports:

One of the questions we ask is "Do you feel your writing has improved?" In the Spring Quarter, 70% of the students answered "yes" to this question, and a high percentage of those answering "no" followed up with comments like these: "No, in fact, I got into a bad rut in this class because I was concentrating on the content of the paper rather than the writing" or "I don't feel my writing improved but I did learn how to write a good research paper." These seemingly negative comments appear to result from misconceptions about what writing is—from the mistaken idea that "writing" and

"content" are separate. We are happy to have students concentrating upon "content" when they . . . learn to write research papers—even if they themselves conceive of those forms of learning as separate from "writing." Furthermore, most of the students who answer "no" to the question about whether their writing has improved answer "yes" to the following question: "Do you feel that you have understood the course material itself better through having to write about it?" In the Spring Quarter (of 1985), 92% answered "yes" to that question. (15)

The majority of students respond positively to the writing sections, although they occasionally perceive writing as a separate activity from learning the course material. While some students were disappointed not to receive instructions in such matters as sentence structure and grammar, almost all students say they better understand the course material because they frequently write about it.

## Administrative Issues

A number of administrative issues have emerged as crucial in launching the program at UCSD. Here I will address actual and potential difficulties that a program like ours faces.

### Training and Workload of Teaching Assistants

For teaching assistants from different disciplines to succeed with the teaching of writing, a training workshop and follow-up meetings are of utmost importance. At UCSD, teaching assistants attend a three-day training session before the beginning of the term. They discuss current methods of teaching writing, analyze and evaluate sample student papers, and develop a sequence of writing assignments that ask for a variety of discourse forms. They also discuss ways of conducting in-class workshops, discussions, and peer-group collaboration. Training sessions are structured much the same way successful faculty workshops have been conducted, workshops described by Toby Fulwiler ("The Personal Connection"), Anne Herrington ("Writing to Learn"), and Ann Raimes ("Writing and Learning Across the Curriculum"). In addition to introductory training sessions, teaching assistants (like all teachers) need feedback regarding their teaching performance. Class observations by a composition specialist and follow-up meetings can provide the support necessary for new instructors to succeed. At UCSD, teaching assistants are observed at least once a quarter by the composition specialist and meet with her to discuss their teaching techniques and goals.

The workload of TAs of writing sections needs to be monitored carefully so that it is fair and attractive when compared to the workload of TAs teaching discussion sections. Although the program tries to adjust

the teaching load for the TAs of the writing section by keeping the enrollment limited to fifteen students (about half the size of the discussion sections), there have been exceptions to the rule. Consequently, some teaching assistants carry a heavier work load than their counterparts teaching discussion sections. While most of the teaching assistants are enthusiastic and successful instructors, some are disgruntled about the workload. Furthermore, some teaching assistants feel coerced into teaching writing sections when they would have preferred to teach discussion sections. This last problem arises from a related one: the relative lack of autonomy of the program coordinator.

### Autonomy of the Coordinator

The composition specialist and program coordinator of the writing sections needs to have *full autonomy* in the hiring, training, and supervising of teaching assistants for the writing sections. Unless the coordinator possesses such autonomy, teaching assistants may experience a conflict of loyalty: to the professor lecturing the course on one hand and to the coordinator supervising the writing sections on the other. In our program, the teaching assistants for both writing and discussions sections are selected by the lecturing professor. Consequently, some teaching assistants feel more loyal to the professor in the discipline than to the program coordinator. As a consequence, TAs sometimes regard the training session as a burden and resent it when the coordinator—who did not hire them—requires work and cooperation. Also, TAs occasionally receive contradictory messages about the purpose of writing assignments. For example, while professors in the disciplines may regard writing assignments only as a means of testing what students have learned, the coordinator encourages writing to learn and explore ideas, writing that takes on a variety of forms and purposes.

The only solution to these problems, as far as we can tell, is to increase the autonomy of the coordinator. Currently, the Curriculum and Academic Affairs Committee at Third College is considering a proposal—submitted by Cooper and MacDonald—that would allow the coordinator to select and then train and supervise TAs for the writing sections. In order to mollify departmental fears of losing TA fund allocations, the coordinator would give first priority in the hiring to TAs in the disciplines of the lecture course and second priority to TAs with previous experience in the teaching of writing. Increasing the coordinator's autonomy, Cooper and MacDonald argue, would alleviate the problems described above because teaching assistants would be hired with a clear understanding of their duties and be provided with training that would enable them to achieve the program's instructional goals.

## Cooperation Among Faculty

For any sizable program to succeed, cooperation among faculty from different disciplines, teaching assistants, and the composition specialist/coordinator are of the utmost importance. All parties involved must be willing to meet on a regular basis (bi- or tri-weekly) in order to discuss course goals, assignments, the reading load, and exams so that students can understand course objectives and receive clear, non-contradictory messages. In the program described here, cooperation sometimes fails, and consequently, deadlines for different projects conflict and the reading/writing load is distributed unevenly. Not surprisingly, at times students feel confused and overwhelmed.

Cooperation requires careful planning and work. Syllabi, for example, need to be prepared well in advance of the first week of classes so that the coordinator and the TAs can plan writing assignments around lectures and required readings. This coordination is particularly difficult at the onset of a new program. At UCSD, after the program's three year existence, however, the lecturing faculty have become familiar with the writing adjuncts courses and begun to recognize the benefits for students' learning, and the coordinator better understands the lecture materials and has collected a sizable repertoire of successful writing assignments and journal questions. Consequently, cooperation is now achieved more easily. All problems described here can be solved, as we are attempting at UCSD. But more importantly, they can be avoided if a new program is designed carefully, if the workload of TAs is monitored closely, and if the coordinator is bestowed with full autonomy in the selecting, training, and supervising of teaching assistants.

## Conclusion

WAC programs have been growing in number and size across the nation in recent years. While this growth is encouraging and offers hope that educational reform can have a lasting impact, it would be foolish to underestimate institutional resistance to such programs. David Russell, who reviewed the rise and decline of two early WAC programs, warns us that "WAC programs must be woven so tightly into the fabric of the institution as to resist the subtle unraveling effect of academic politics" (191). Like other programs before it, the program at UCSD could fail if we don't heed Russell's warning and manage to "weave" the program "tightly" into the institutional structure. There are three main steps to institutionalize programs, according to Russell: setting realistic goals, establishing permanent funding, and having patience to "change century-old university priorities and classroom practices" (191). These

three issues still have to be addressed and resolved at UCSD. We believe we have a *conceptually* sound program, but only time will tell whether it is *institutionally* sound.

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## Announcements

The *Writing Lab Newsletter* is an informal monthly publication for those who direct or tutor in writing labs and language skills centers. Articles, announcements, columns, and reviews of materials focus on topics in tutoring writing. For those who wish to join the newsletter group, a yearly donation of \$7.50 (\$12.50/yr. for Canadians) to defray printing and mailing costs would be appreciated. Please make checks payable to Purdue University. Send requests to join, checks, and manuscripts for the newsletter to:

Muriel Harris, Editor  
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The annual conference of the Council of Writing Program Administrators will be held July 24-28, 1989, at the Marcum Conference Center of Miami University, Oxford, Ohio. The *WPA Newsletter* and other relevant composition journals will contain further details and calls for papers.

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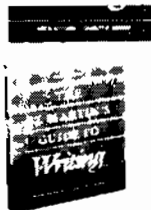
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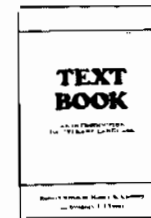
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In addition, writing centers and labs are invited to display their materials and services at Materials Exchange Tables. If you plan to participate in the Materials Exchange, please send us, by March 1, a brief description of the types of materials you wish to submit and the amount of space you will need to display these materials.

Please send all proposals, requests for display space, and inquiries regarding registration to:

Ulle E. Lewes  
Writing Resource Center  
Ohio Wesleyan University  
Delaware, Ohio 43015

## Notes on Contributors

**Evelyn Ashton-Jones** directs the writing center and teaches composition and literature at the University of Tampa. She serves as assistant editor of the *Journal of Advanced Composition* and treasurer of the Association of Teachers of Advanced Composition. Among her publications are a collection of co-edited essays on Advanced Placement English (forthcoming, Boynton/Cook) and an advanced essay reader (forthcoming, Random House).

**Barbara Cambridge** is an Assistant Professor of English at Indiana University/Purdue University at Indianapolis. She is the Coordinator for Advanced Writing and has taught courses in Writing in the Arts and Sciences, Advanced Composition, and Theories and Practice in Composition. Her articles on writing have appeared in journals such as *The Writing Instructor* and *Computers and Composition*. She currently serves as editor of the *Journal of Teaching Writing* and is Executive Director of the Indiana Teachers of Writing.

**Rebecca M. Howard** is an Assistant Professor of Writing and Director of the Interdisciplinary Writing Program at Colgate University. Her papers given at professional conferences have explored curriculum development and attendant philosophical and political issues. Her current research is on the elements of Romantic epistemology in contemporary composition curricula.

**Gesa Kirsch**, formerly a Visiting Lecturer in the Department of Literature at the University of California, San Diego, is currently an Assistant Professor of English at Wayne State University. Her interests include studies of the composing process, particularly writers' audience awareness and issues in writing across the curriculum. Currently, she is editing (with Duane Roen) a book collection which examines recent theories and research on audience.

**Gary A. Olson**, a writing program administrator for ten years, is an associate professor and teacher in the graduate program in rhetoric and composition at the University of South Florida. He has served as associate editor of *Technical Communication* and is currently editor of the *Journal of Advanced Composition*. His numerous publications include *Writing Centers: Theory and Administration*, published by NCTE.

**Helon Howell Raines** has taught writing and literature at Casper College for twelve years. She also teaches for the University of Wyoming, Casper College Upper-Division Center. She has published literary criticism and fiction in journals such as *Frontiers*, *The Denver Quarterly*, and *The Mississippi Review*. Although she has given many papers on writing at conferences such as RMMLA, WPA, and the Wyoming Conference on English, this is her first journal article about writing. She is continuing her research on programs in two-year colleges as well as organizing a Writing Center.

**John Trimbur** is a professor in the Humanities Department at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester, Mass. He is a Fellow of the Brooklyn College Institute in Training Peer Tutors, a member of the WPA Board of Consultant-Evaluators, and chairperson for the NCTE Committee on the Underemployment of College Teachers of English. He has published articles and reviews on John Gardner, Charles Olson, and Jack Spicer and has contributed a chapter to *Perspectives on Research and Scholarship in Composition* (MLA, 1985).

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