

 Writing
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Journal of the Council of Writing Program Administrators
Volume 13, Numbers 1-2, Fall/Winter, 1989

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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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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 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 articles 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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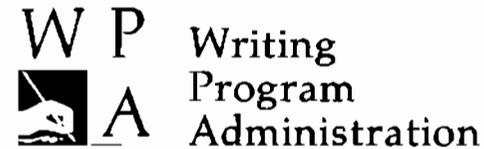
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The Power of Naming: Names that Create and Define the Discipline

Cherryl Armstrong and Sheryl I. Fontaine

Among other responsibilities, Writing Program Administrators have the task of naming. We must decide whether to have a Writing Lab or a Writing Center; a staff of tutors or consultants; courses in Freshman composition, expository writing, or writing workshop; whether to direct a program of writing across the curriculum or writing across the disciplines; and even whether to call our own discipline rhetoric or composition. Though this task may appear commonplace, Paulo Freire's observation that naming the world is a model for changing the world suggests that the actual impact of our acts of naming may be much greater than we have imagined (97). The names Writing Program Administrators choose have both immediate and far-reaching effects, shaping others' perceptions about the places or programs we name and also about Composition. As such, they provide a valuable lens through which to observe the discipline as it evolves, as its perimeters continue to shift and come into focus. The lens provided by the stories—what Stephen North calls the lore—of WPAs who must make decisions about naming will allow members of the discipline to self-consciously observe Composition take shape, to look for telling contradictions, patterns, and trends in its development.

In this essay, by reflecting on naming in Composition, we will see what observations can be made about the discipline, about what is important to it, and what concepts define it. We will share our own stories as Writing Program Administrators who select and change names, as well as what we have learned from stories of other WPAs. Further, we wish to consider the psychological and social dimensions that lend power to the act of naming and make this everyday activity into something much more influential than it may initially appear. The power and influence inherent in the act of naming suggests that where we can identify common moments during which names have been given or changed, during which related negotiations have occurred or conflicts arisen, we should also find important points of growth or tension in the field. Examining these collective naming stories should allow us to draw some generalizations about the developing discipline of Composition.

The Authors' Stories

Our interest in the importance of naming began recently, after we each had accepted positions at schools which were very different from our previous institutions. During the course of several conversations, it became clear to us that regardless of the size or affiliation of our schools, as Writing Program Administrators, we shared common experiences, and some of the most complex of these had to do with naming.

Cherryl Armstrong:

At California State University, Northridge, one of the largest of the nineteen Cal State campuses, with a mostly commuter population of around 30,000, I have had several experiences with what Sheryl and I have begun referring to as the "name game." Perhaps the most striking of these has been my not entirely successful attempt to change the name of the Composition faculty. Ladder faculty at Northridge only rarely teach Freshman writing. The courses are staffed by graduate teaching assistants, and mostly, by members of the faculty called "part-timers." Some part-timers have taught composition on our campus for as many as ten years. Many part-timers teach more courses per semester than full-timers. Although it has yet to fully catch on, my coadministrator, Thia Wolf and I refer to the staff, as a group, as the Composition faculty and, as individuals, as lecturers. Before coming to Cal State, I already had some experience with the name game when I taught at Harvard University. There, it had been my job to set up, within the Expository Writing Program, Harvard's first basic writing course for students who find writing particularly difficult. The apparent contradiction of the names "Harvard" and "Basic Writing" at first led some students and faculty to question whether the course or the students in it or both were appropriate for the university. In the second year of the program, the course did not provoke this uneasiness, not only because the first year students could recommend it to new students, but because we changed the name from "Basic Writing" to "Introduction to Expository Writing," and we changed the course number from 5 to 10 so that "Introduction to Expository Writing" fit in the sequence that begins at number 11 (Armstrong).

Sheryl I. Fontaine:

Like Cherryl, I initiated the renaming of the basic writing course at Claremont McKenna College—a small, highly competitive private school and one of the consortium of five Claremont Colleges in Southern California. During my first semester, I taught a writing course named "Preceptorial English" and numbered Lit 10X. Many students referred to the course simply as "X." I supposed that because Lit 10 was the required writing course and Preceptorial English was the extra one, it had become 10X. And the name "Preceptorial," I imagined, had had something to do with the British education system and the fact that originally each section

of the course had an assigned tutor to work with students individually. It turns out that Preceptorial English was named by default, taking its name from the summer bridge program which had predated it. In fact, the department hadn't named the course; the registrar had done so in order to fill in the requisite space for "name" in the course catalogue. Given that we now have a full-fledged, semester-long course separate from the bridge program, I suggested that we change the name to one that reflected the changes in the course and that would make the course seem more connected to the rest of the college writing curriculum. The name "Fundamentals of College Writing" was selected by the department. The course was renumbered Lit 9—certainly an improvement over Lit 10X, but unfortunately, the only single digit course number in the department.

I am not altogether happy with the name of the English Resources Center—a writing center that I was hired to direct. I would like to change the name to Writing Center, a simple name which would more accurately reflect the spirit of the place. For the moment, I have only renamed the "tutors" as "writing consultants" in an attempt to soften the prescriptive edge of "English Resources Center" and to encourage students who come see us to ask for response and advice rather than editorial changes in spelling and usage.

Psychological and Social Dimensions of Naming

The name game stories that we have told are not unlike the experiences of Writing Program Administrators around the country. While the specific courses or programs and the names we choose may vary, our stories are neither unique nor surprising. But before we add to our own stories what we have learned from other WPAs, let us consider the psychological and social dimensions of naming, dimensions which are the source of its power.

Post structuralists, following Saussure, have argued that while the relationship between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary (Eagleton 127-29), once established it lends a heuristic power to language. Consequently, as we use language to name, order, and codify the world, we both alter and create perceptions (see, for example, Umberto Eco, Michel Foucault, and Roland Barthes for various perspectives on this topic). Central to this conception of naming is the understanding that naming, in its most simple representation, involves individuals in a concurrent process of sorting and gathering, comparing and contrasting within one's evolving view of reality (Berthoff, *Making* 110). Through this process and guided by one's own values, an individual abstracts what she perceives as the salient features of objects and experiences, using these to classify and, finally, name them. By naming something, one actively carves out a

space for it to occupy, a space defined by what one values in the phenomenon and by how it appears to be like or unlike other parts of one's world view. James Britton explains that by conferring names on objects, we engage in a "process of bringing into existence the objects of the immediate environment" (40). In this sense, we create the phenomena that we name, imperceptibly shaping the objects we see or the experiences we recall.

The power of naming, however, goes beyond shaping the perceptions of the namer. Once chosen, a name suggests permanence, as if it could lay a claim upon the true nature of an object. By fixing an object or experience with an apparent unity or permanent focus, names appear to represent the true nature of phenomena (Berthoff, *Reclaiming* 151). And when names we use are passed on, or when we integrate existing names into our own language, we assimilate with them what they imply about the nature of the phenomena named.

But acts of naming do not often occur in isolation. Rather, they take place in a social context. We name the parts of our world within an already existing structure of previously named parts where we, too, have already been named, where we are called college graduate, Democrat, or resident of Southern California. We name the world not merely as individuals but as members of social and political groups or organizations.

The characteristics inherent in naming—its variability and its false promise of permanence, its way of narrowing down our perceptions—become for us, as social beings, the problems of marking our social and political territory. Based on their personal interests and values, individuals abstract the salient features from objects and experience, using them to classify and name. In a social context, these salient features become the territorial boundaries and conditions of group membership (Taylor 17).

And so, in the academy, the names we choose, which selectively highlight what is valuable to our social or political group, are understood to represent the true nature of what we have named, and in that sense they "create" the course, program, or job. Similarly, the implications and conceptual connotations of the names we select powerfully influence our perceptions of the curriculum, shaping what Mike Rose has called our "political-semantic web" (342). The status or value of our honors program or basic course is achieved and maintained, in part, because of the names we have chosen for them. Modifiers such as "student-centered," "creative," and "collaborative" may, for instance, have political connotations with the left, while "basics," "core," and "excellence" may have connotations with the right (Taylor 8). A "writing clinic" may have medical, quick-fix connotations, and a "writing workshop" may appear to be more collaborative than a "composition class." Each name and connotation works to shape our understanding of and beliefs about the part of the curriculum being named.

Moreover, as Kenneth Burke explains, because by naming we are not only classifying what has taken our attention, we are necessarily "directing the attention into some channels rather than others" (45), every act of naming must be viewed as exclusionary as well as creative. Just as an individual carves out a piece of reality for herself through the act of naming, shaving off those parts which she does not deem valuable, a group (or the individual who represents it) takes on the ability to exclude or include, burden or empower other individuals by the act of naming them. In naming the honors program, we do more than lend status to it; we in turn diminish the prestige of the other non-honors programs. Conversely, by conferring the name of basic to one course, we raise the status of the rest of our courses.

In the negotiations surrounding the process of naming, we sense its real strength. If names create and alter reality, making territorial claims for groups, then certainly negotiations among groups or the representatives of groups will play an integral part in the naming process. When names change or when different groups appropriate the same name, negotiations occur not only over the names themselves, but over the perceptual alterations that ensue, and most seriously, over who has the authority to give or change names. When ownership of a name is tossed from one group to the next, the status and connotations attached to the name vary and it becomes increasingly difficult to predict how the name will shape perceptions, or to feel secure in its apparent stability. And when the representatives of more than one group believe *themselves* to be the most appropriate namers, to be the ones who should control perceptions, then negotiation can easily turn into conflict. Indeed, the degree to which the process of naming is likely to create conflict, even violence, is suggested in Jacques Derrida's discussion of language. According to Derrida, language, by its nature, inscribes the world with differences, with classifications which one comes to believe are unique. And, thus, using language is an act of "arche-violence" (Siebers 83), of separation and division. The process of naming takes particular advantage of the inscriptive, classificatory nature of language, heightening the potential for such conflict and violence, not only within the language system but among language users.

The Power of Naming in Composition

We feel that the creative power of naming then is particularly important in an emerging discipline such as Composition. Complicating the naming process for our discipline is our territorial relationship with Literature. Members of Literature departments traditionally have been in charge of naming Composition courses, programs, and instructors. As Composition has become a more established discipline, the relationship between

Composition and Literature has become more strained. The exact relationship varies among departments—from programs where Composition is marginalized within a Literature department, to programs where Composition is a comfortable sibling with Literature, to programs where Composition is completely autonomous.

In Composition, the volatility of negotiations over naming will vary correspondingly. At their most volatile, negotiations may turn into heated conflict when the two groups are struggling for authority or when one group fears being displaced. When this happens, names can be the visible manifestations of this conflict. For example, a Composition specialist who wants to name a new program "Rhetoric" may face severe opposition from faculty who wish to retain the name "Rhetoric" for courses in Classics. This opposition could create a harmful rift among faculty members, preventing any changes in the program from occurring.

What We Learned from Writing Program Administrators' Stories

At this point, we would like to examine the stories we told earlier as well as what we have learned from other Writing Program Administrators, looking first at the similarities among our naming experiences, and then beyond the names to the negotiations that take place in response to our acts (or attempted acts) of naming. If our assumption is correct, what we negotiate for in our daily experiences of naming will reflect larger areas of definition for which the discipline as a whole is fighting.

Most of the stories from which we have drawn were told to us by participants of the 1988 Council of Writing Program Administrators Summer Conference in Newport, RI. We are grateful to them and to other WPAs who have shared their experiences with us. Because these stories have been passed on orally, without any permanent tape or written record, the observations that follow are based on our recollections and notes. Needless to say, a permanent record of such stories would make a valuable document of WPA lore.

In the stories we heard, we found that Writing Program Administrators most often share the common experience of naming and renaming (1) courses, (2) job titles, (3) programs, and (4) the discipline.

Like the two of us, many WPAs tell stories about changing the names of basic writing courses. We changed the names and numbers of our courses from "Basic Writing" (Expos 5) to "Introduction to Expository Writing" (Expos 10) and from "Preceptorial Writing" (Lit 10X) to "Fundamentals of College Writing" (Lit 9). Other administrators tell

stories of courses that have changed from "Subject A" to "English 1" or from "Freshman Composition" to "Writing Workshop."

Many of us also share stories about changing the names of job titles—our own or others'. Some Writing Program Administrators have changed the name "coordinator" to "director," while others have done the reverse. Several administrators told of changing the titles given to the writing tutors they supervise, replacing "tutor" with "writing consultant" or "writing adjunct," or adding the term "peer" to "tutor." At schools where most of the writing faculty are hired on a part-time basis, the job title of "part-timer," "contract teacher," or "adjunct" versus "lecturer" has become a recurring naming concern.

Stories of naming and renaming also occur in relation to programs. At two universities in California the name "Composition" was exchanged for "Writing": the "Third College Composition Program" became the "Third College Writing Program" and the "Freshman Composition Program" became the "University Writing Program." One writing program named itself "SCRATCH: Special Committee to Recognize and Teach Compositional Hang-ups." Later, this name was changed to the "Rhetoric, Linguistics, and Composition Program."

Finally, naming stories overlap and may be said to converge in the shifting names of the discipline itself. Some Writing Program Administrators refer to the discipline as "Rhetoric" while others adamantly insist it is "Composition," and still others argue for the name "Writing." (Stephen North describes the emergence of the discipline as in part a change from composition to Composition.) Professional identities fluctuate among these names as WPAs are referred to and call themselves "rhetoricians," "composition specialists," "writing specialists," or "compositionists."

Negotiations Over Naming

In the process of recording the occasions for naming shared by Writing Program Administrators, we have also heard about many instances of negotiation and, at times, conflict. Few WPAs are able to instantiate name changes without at least some negotiation with colleagues. Indeed, we have come to believe that the negotiations that occur around proposed name changes may tell us more about ourselves and our discipline than the proposed changes themselves.

In each instance of naming a course, job, or program, WPAs find themselves hoping either to affect its relationship relative to other courses, individuals, and so on, or to describe more accurately its function. When, for example, we propose changing the names of basic writing courses, we are nearly always attempting to connect them with

the rest of the college curriculum, to bring them in from their marginal, remedial position, to change their status in the department or university. Similarly, when we change job titles, we negotiate our position in relation to our colleagues'. A WPA who wanted to keep his title "coordinator," explained that he believed "coordinator" would imply articulation between himself and his department. On the other hand, some WPAs who insist on the title "director" feel the need to add prestige to their positions, while others prefer "director" as simply a more accurate description of their administrative function. Administrators who find the name "part-timer" objectionable argue that it is at once a demeaning and inaccurate title, describing an internal contractual ranking rather than an individual's function as a teacher.

The stories we have heard about naming writing programs also point to a concern with repositioning programs in relation to departments or the university or with supplying more effective descriptions of a program's function. The negotiations between those who would name a program "Special Committee to Recognize and Teach Compositional Hang-ups" and those who wanted to change the name to "Rhetoric, Linguistics, and Composition Program" reflect a difference in the way the members of the two groups view composition and teaching. The avant-garde status of the first name may have been lost to those who suggested the second content-focused name. At the same time, the creators of the first program name may not have appreciated the substantive and interdisciplinary status of the second.

By examining the shared moments in the naming stories we tell and have heard, we have identified two points of tension and discussion: (1) the relative position or relationship that our course, jobs, and programs hold in the curriculum, department, and university and (2) the function or process of these parts of the discipline that we name. From here, as suggested earlier, we may move to recognize the value that these issues have to the discipline as a whole. We would argue that these issues mark where and how the discipline is most actively growing and changing. Compositionists continue to examine and reexamine, from different perspectives, the relative position of students with respect to their teachers, their texts, and their peers and to explore the dimensions of what process and function mean in writing and learning.

Our goal in this essay is certainly not to claim that we are uncovering for the first time the existence of these issues. However, their appearance in the shared stories of Writing Program Administrators is more than an interesting coincidence. Our tales of negotiation, success, and sometimes even defeat are not just stories to exchange over conference cocktails; they are telling moments in the evolution of our discipline. The extent of our concern with the relative position held by our students, our

courses, and our jobs and with the theoretical and pedagogical importance of examining process and function underlies what is most important to our burgeoning discipline. These issues appear in journal and conference discussions about academic discourse and alternate discourses, about the role of the "expert" in WAC programs, about the kinds of textbooks and the complexity of teaching apparatus that a writing course should use. And as interesting, if not more so, is the fact that these issues raise the most dust in departmental debates, suggesting that they may also be the locus of important disciplinary struggles.

The Ultimate Power of Naming

But even our current discussion is not exempt from the false promise of permanence inherent in naming. For the sake of our argument, we have named the two points of negotiation in the discipline "relative position" and "process/function." In so doing, we categorized our own perceptions of what is valuable in the naming stories we experienced and heard, and, using the power of naming, carved out for our readers a way to look at and understand the issue. While we don't want to understate our conclusion that these are important points of tension, we must also point out that in the course of making our argument, we have identified something even more fundamental to the act of naming: we have named component parts of naming by assuming for ourselves the authority to do so.

Negotiations over course names, job titles, and program terminology are certainly telling and worthy of attention and study, but underlying these negotiations is the more basic negotiation for the authority to name and thereby create our discipline. When we struggle for what may appear to be minor changes that will be written in course catalogues or job descriptions, we are simultaneously struggling to shape the perceptions of those who read these changes, and, most importantly, we are fighting for what is really at stake: how our discipline will evolve, and who will shape its future. In this regard, Compositionists would do well to listen to Audre Lorde advising women poets, "If we don't name ourselves we are nothing. If the world defines you it will define you to your disadvantage" (Ostriker 59) and to consider, for Composition, the dangers of not claiming the instantiative power of naming for ourselves.

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Teaching Basic Writing: The Community College on the University Campus

David E. Schwalm

Colleges and universities in the United States have developed a variety of familiar ways to provide basic writing instruction for students eligible for admission but not adequately prepared to succeed in the typical English 101 course. Two years ago, Arizona State University took a new approach of which all WPAs should be aware: inviting community college faculty to campus to teach basic writing.

ASU's approach to offering basic writing was described by Richardson and Bender in a recent book for educational administrators on the roles of urban universities and community colleges in minority education (71). Word about the program is spreading among administrators nationally, and we have been getting frequent inquiries about it. A few universities have now developed similar programs, and still more institutions are, or will be, considering this approach to providing basic writing instruction. WPAs at medium to large public institutions—the kinds of schools most likely to try this approach—may find a discussion of our experience useful.

As Director of Composition at ASU, I find myself in a difficult position. I have been outspokenly opposed to offering basic writing in this way—for reasons that will be detailed at the end of this article. At the same time, because my opposition has been unavailing, I have had to cooperate in implementing effectively an arrangement I thoroughly disapprove of. Something of that near schizophrenia is reflected in this article. In what follows, I will describe the ASU program in detail, review the problems we have encountered, and suggest how most of those problems can be avoided. In so doing, however, I am not recommending that the experiment be tried. I will conclude with some reflections on the disturbing implications of this approach to teaching basic writing.

I recognize that the interface between community colleges and universities is sensitive territory where the arrogance of universities often provokes defensive responses from community colleges, and issues get lost in bad feeling. I want to make it clear at the outset that the issue is not who can provide the better basic writing course. The community college

is providing as good a basic writing course as we could provide ourselves. I object to the ASU program because it represents unacceptable administrative interference in matters of curriculum and is, moreover, symptomatic of our administrators' refusals to face the writing needs of students qualified for admission to the university.

The Program

ASU has contracted with South Mountain Community College (SMCC), one of 9 campuses of the Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD), to send full- and part-time faculty to the ASU campus to teach ENG 071, a three-hour basic writing course. ENG 071 is listed in the ASU schedule of classes, and students may register and pay for it along with their ASU courses. ENG 071 is not, however, an ASU course. It is an MCCCD course governed by system-wide competencies and taught on all MCCCD campuses. Students in ENG 071 are listed on two sets of rosters, one set at the community college and one at ASU. Students pay ASU for the course at ASU tuition rates; ASU then compensates the community college at the community college tuition rate, which is roughly one-third of the rate at ASU. South Mountain Community College claims the credit-hour production. The university does not acknowledge the arrangement with SMCC in the university bulletin or the schedule of classes; thus the course is perceived by students and parents as an ASU course taught by ASU faculty.

Students admitted to ASU who score under 17 on the ACT English test or under 390 on the SAT Verbal are required to enroll in ENG 071. Students enrolled in the course do not receive degree credit at ASU, although the three hours do count toward full-time enrollment and eligibility for financial aid. The course is graded on a "Pass-No Credit" basis. Students who place into ENG 071 must pass it to progress to ENG 101. Those who do not pass can retake the course indefinitely.

Problems

Most of the logistical problems with the ENG 071 program stem directly from the way in which it was instituted. In response to a 1985 mandate from the Regents (reversing their long-standing opposition to developmental education), the university administration asked the English Department to develop a basic writing course. A course proposal was developed, approved, and sent forward through channels. Subsequently, the Academic Vice President (who has since left ASU), without consulting with me or other writing experts in the English Department, tabled the English Department course proposal, negotiated the ENG 071 arrangement with SMCC's administration, and presented it to the English Department as a *fait accompli*.

The Rhetoric and Composition Committee and I objected strenuously. We and other members of the Department, even those who opposed our teaching of basic writing, saw the arrangement as inappropriate administrative interference in matters of curriculum. Thus, the course did not start off well politically, and neither the course nor the SMCC instructors were initially welcomed into the English Department.

But politics aside, administrators, in their haste, did not anticipate practical problems in "rounding out" ASU's composition program with a course that is not an ASU course taught by faculty employed by another institution. Thus, in addition to political difficulties, the program has suffered from problems relating to 1) administration, 2) curriculum, and 3) staffing. Other problems have resulted from hastily chosen placement procedures.

Administrative Problems:

No ASU administrative unit was initially identified as being "in charge" of ENG 071. University administrators apparently assumed (no other arrangements were made) that the English Department would provide offices, telephones, supplies, copying services, and general administrative back up—handling complaints, ordering textbooks, scheduling classes, and so on. The Department, however, received no supplement to already meager operating funds and could not afford to provide support services for non-departmental faculty and courses. As a consequence, the Vice President's office, although reluctant and ill-equipped to do so, was left to handle support services. Because the students in ENG 071 perceive the course to be part of ASU's First-Year Composition program, virtually all inquiries about the course and challenges to placement come through the First-Year Composition Office. Although seriously understaffed, my office has handled this traffic—simply for lack of an alternative. But student grievances remain a more serious problem. Neither I nor the Chair of the Department—nor the Vice President, for that matter—has any administrative authority over SMCC faculty. Thus grievances have to be referred to the SMCC faculty themselves or to their chair located at a campus ten miles away. Established ASU grievance procedures do not apply to ENG 071 students.

The real victims of this lack of planning are the faculty from SMCC, who now find themselves geographically isolated from colleagues at their home campus and politically isolated from English Department faculty at ASU. Only the Chair and I know who the ENG 071 teachers are.

Curriculum:

The curriculum of ENG 071 posed a more serious problem. In expressing to the Associate Vice President (who also has left ASU) my concerns about ensuring that ENG 071 had an appropriate curriculum, it became clear that our administrators assumed that a "remedial" writing course was simply a course in mechanics, grammar, and spelling. The Associate

Vice President thus could not understand why I was concerned about curriculum.

ENG 071 is part of a sequence of developmental writing and reading courses at MCCCDC designed to prepare students for ENG 101. The Rhetoric and Composition Committee and I felt that the MCCCDC curriculum for ENG 071 alone would not do what was necessary to prepare students to succeed in ENG 101 at ASU. Consequently, the SMCC faculty and I worked together to develop a basic writing curriculum coordinated with ASU's writing program. This was a tricky negotiation, requiring much bearing and forbearing on both sides. In addition to being an outspoken critic of the ENG 071 program in the first place, I was, in effect, questioning the value of MCCCDC curriculum. Since the ENG 071 faculty were not ASU employees, they were not obliged to attend to my wishes. They were, in fact, obliged to adhere to the MCCCDC competencies and curriculum. Nevertheless, for the last two years, we have been able informally to hammer out an acceptable curriculum and to select appropriate textbooks.

The SMCC faculty at ASU are now teaching a version of ENG 071 different from the course as taught on their own campus and on the other MCCCDC campuses in the Phoenix area. Thus, ASU will not accept ENG 071 taught anywhere but at ASU as preparation for ENG 101, thereby creating tension among the MCCCDC campuses. Class sizes on the two campuses are also different. On the community college campus ENG 071 sections enroll up to 30-35 students. We insisted that ENG 071 classes at ASU not exceed 20, a class size commensurate with the curriculum we have developed. This class size difference was used by community college administrators to justify teaching loads of up to eight sections per semester, one of the staffing problems we confronted.

Staffing:

During the first year of the program, SMCC committed none of its regular faculty to the ASU program. The course was staffed by faculty on one-year, half-year, and part-time contracts. We thus faced the possibility of having no continuity in the ENG 071 faculty from year to year. This situation was partially rectified when, in response to my raising this issue, SMCC requested and received two tenure-track lines dedicated to the ASU program. I still anticipate annual turnover in the other four or five faculty assigned to teach the course and have only informal input into their selection. Moreover, there is no guarantee that the same tenure-track faculty will continue to be assigned to ASU. Because the SMCC faculty are isolated from both their SMCC and ASU colleagues, it is not an especially desirable teaching assignment. (The SMCC Department Chair who coordinated the program has recently become an assistant dean of a new campus, and one of the two faculty hired to teach in the program requested a transfer to another campus. Of the faculty and

administrators originally involved in ENG 071, one SMCC instructor and I are the only survivors.)

A different problem with staffing has yet to be resolved but may be only a local issue. The normal course load for MCCCDC faculty is five courses per semester. Their contract agreements, however, allow them to teach up to fifteen hours of overload courses annually. In the first semester of the program, two of the ENG 071 instructors were teaching eight sections each, a teaching load that far exceeds national professional guidelines proposed by the NCTE and the ADE. Because of the nature of community college contracts in our area, there is nothing we can do about this.

Placement:

A final problem is the method of placement adopted by the Vice President's office: relying on standardized test scores alone. I do not know who chose the procedures or the cutoff scores or why. I do know that we have reason to be concerned.

Institutions demographically similar to ASU place a much higher percentage of students in basic writing courses than we do. During the first year of the ENG 071 program, we did an informal study to check accuracy of placement. All students in ENG 071 and ENG 101 wrote in class on the same relatively easy diagnostic prompt. The instructors holistically scored writing samples for their own classes using a common scoring rubric accompanied by anchor papers to illustrate each rating category 0-4. However, instructors were not formally calibrated or conformed. Of over 500 students placed by test score into ENG 071, only 8 (1.7%) were moved up to ENG 101. Predictably, 70% of ENG 071 students received a score of 1 or 2. The performance of ENG 101 students, however, suggests that our cutoff score is too low: over 500 students (19%) who placed into ENG 101 scored a 1 on the diagnostic essay; nearly 1000 (37.2%) received a score of 2.

The advantage of the current placement procedure is that it costs the university virtually nothing. Most of our students have taken either the SAT or the ACT at their own expense in high school. The University Testing Service does offer the ACT English test free to the small number of students who have not had the test or who wish to try to improve their scores.

Our experience has been that the ACT, which most ASU students take, is a reasonably accurate predictor at the extremes but is mushy in the middle—in that area where cutoff scores are established. White reminds us that a score on a multiple choice test like the ACT is actually the midpoint of a band of scores (232-233). Indeed, the shift of a point or two on the ACT English test has an enormous impact on the numbers of students placed into basic writing courses. Approximately 15-16% of incoming freshmen now place into ENG 071. If we were to raise the

cutoff score from 16 to 18, 31% of new students would place into ENG 071. We might be able to place students more accurately if those who scored in the middle range of the ACT also provided a writing sample that would show how well they could do the kind of writing tasks we expect them to be able to do in ENG 101 (White 233).

These then are the major problems we have encountered in subcontracting basic writing to the community college. With a little foresight, most of these problems could have been solved or ameliorated in some way.

Solutions

One solution, of course, is to avoid this kind of arrangement altogether. Wherever it is proposed, WPAs should protest vehemently. But (and this is where the schizophrenia comes in) they should also prepare a backup plan to make the arrangement as workable as possible. My major strategic error was in not gauging accurately the depth of our administrators' commitment to the arrangement they negotiated. I continued to protest beyond the point where I should have understood that the arrangement was inevitable. I did not develop a backup plan. Drawing on our experience, I have recently proposed the following measures, which are generally applicable wherever this arrangement may be tried:

1. In order to ease most political and administrative problems and to create a desirable collegial situation, the English Department or other unit responsible for teaching writing should make a home for the course and its faculty. As a condition of doing so, however, the department should receive an addition to its operations budget sufficient to cover the costs of providing support services. The costs of office space, telephones, supplies, duplicating, and secretarial support should be taken into account.
2. Rather than extracting an existing course from the community college literacy curriculum, the university and community college writing faculty should design a new course specifically to meet the needs of the university students, to coordinate with the university writing program, and to be taught only on the university campus. Competencies, objectives, and class size should be clearly stipulated. Developing a unique course offered only on the university campus also eliminates the questionable practice of charging university tuition for a community college course.
3. The community college, as part of the agreement, should submit a plan that will insure reasonable continuity in the staffing of the course. At the very least, there should be a core of tenured or tenure-track faculty regularly assigned to the program. The

university WPA should be involved in the hiring process. The use of part-time faculty should be discouraged. Efforts should be made, if necessary, to establish a reasonable maximum teaching load.

4. The university should study placement procedures used at similar institutions and adopt procedures that are theoretically sound and practically effective. The university and community college should also cooperate in developing assessment strategies for ongoing evaluation of the basic writing program. Because students are being required to pay for a non-credit course, the institution must be able to defend both the accuracy of placement and the effectiveness of instruction.

If these measures are accepted here, most of the logistical difficulties and bad feeling that we have experienced can be smoothed over. If measures like these are enacted at the very beginning in other places where such an arrangement is attempted, most problems can be avoided altogether.

Then why isn't this plan the ideal way to offer basic writing? The quality of instruction that students receive in ENG 071 has not been in question except when instructors were teaching as many as eight sections each. The faculty assigned by SMCC to the ENG 071 program have been very good. And certainly the primary objective of all concerned should be that students receive a high quality basic writing course that will help them to succeed in ENG 101. If this objective is being achieved and the "bugs" in the program can be worked out, what grounds for objection can be left other than trivial "turf" issues? What does it matter who signs the paychecks?

Implications

The conflict here is not between the university and the community college. The "turf" issues are intramural, and they are not trivial when the contestants are university faculty and administrators and when curriculum is the contested ground. In this instance, administrators largely uninformed or misinformed about the field of composition and the writing needs of students have made decisions that have an enormous impact on the composition curriculum in itself and as an integral part of the larger university curriculum. A quality basic writing program for ASU students is the central issue, of course. But teaching is an opportunity for faculty as well as for students. Our administrators fail to understand that teaching composition—in particular, teaching basic writers—has become an academic specialty of scholars and advanced degree candidates in English, a specialty complete with respected professional journals and well-established professional organizations. Administrators share with some members of the English Department the notion that teaching composition is the literature teacher's burden. They

do not understand that rhetoric and composition specialists may well be engaged in essential research when they are in the basic writing classroom.

Furthermore, subcontracting basic writing instruction has implications for graduate education in our department. Our teaching assistant program is an important part of the career preparation of our M.A. and Ph.D. students. While some of them may get jobs at large research universities where the faculty do not usually teach composition, most will teach at smaller universities or community colleges where the typical semester teaching load will be three to five courses, one or more of which will be composition. Because the English Department does not offer the basic writing course at ASU, our TAs do not have an opportunity to learn to teach basic writing or to study basic writing students. Ironically, some of our best recent graduates could not be considered for the SMCC tenure-track positions dedicated to teaching ENG 071 at ASU because they lacked experience in basic writing (I was an *ex officio* member of the hiring committee). Both graduate students and faculty who are interested in studying how adults acquire academic literacy do not have access to basic writing students. The university is turning away from an opportunity for important research.

Our administrators denigrate the study of adult literacy, the community college, and basic writers themselves when they say that teaching basic writing is inappropriate in a university but quite proper in a community college. But my major objection to subcontracting basic writing instruction lies in the "mind set" implicit in the action. Our administrators have told me, explicitly, that they do not want to commit institutional resources to "remediation." That is, they do not want to make long term commitments, especially tenure-track faculty appointments, to addressing a "temporary" problem that they are certain will be eliminated shortly through "enrollment management" (new admissions standards) and improvements in primary and secondary education. This is a classic instance of what Mike Rose has called "the myth of transience," a favorite belief of college and university administrators that "serves to keep certain fundamental recognitions and thus certain fundamental changes at bay" (355-356).

There is evidence readily available that "enrollment management" will not eliminate the need for basic writing. Recently-approved, higher admissions standards (and they are reasonably high—3.00 high school GPA, or top 25% of graduating class, or composite scores of 21 ACT or 930 SAT) would—if enforced—reduce the demand for basic writing by about 65%, but a significant demand would remain. However, the new standards would also eliminate one-third of the students enrolled in ENG 101, a fair reflection of what they would do to the whole freshman class. These admissions standards, in addition, would devastate ASU's already

meager minority enrollments at a time when the University is under pressure to attract and retain more minority students. Consequently, the University will continue to admit "provisionally" those students who fall between the old and new standards. Thus it seems that the new admissions standards will not in any case eliminate the need for basic writing and that a significant demand for basic writing will persist among students provisionally admitted.

Will improved primary and secondary education make up the difference? The gloomy results of recent, state-wide testing show that only 17% of Arizona high school juniors can write at an "acceptable" level and only 37% of junior high students wrote "acceptably." (The decline in writing ability from junior high to high school is a typical pattern.) This gives us a pretty good portrait of the future.

Conclusions

The arrangement ASU has with the community college to teach basic writing can be workable, if not desirable. Other institutions that attempt it can benefit from our mistakes and avoid the problems that have developed at ASU. But in saying this, I am not recommending the experiment, for the implications of this program are troubling.

As most WPAs know too well, a lot of lip service is paid to the importance of teaching students how to read and write, but few institutions are willing to devote sufficient resources to the task, even while eagerly collecting tuition from students who are poorly prepared as writers. The basic writing program at ASU is just another instance of how universities avoid devoting adequate funds to composition programs. More importantly, the arrangement reminds us that uninformed or ill-informed administrators continue to make curricular decisions that have been and continue to be detrimental to composition programs. First of all our administrators seem to remain almost willfully unaware that adult literacy consists of more than "a good dose of grammar" and has become a focus of professional scholarly interest and research. For composition and adult literacy specialists, teaching basic writing is not "teaching the rudiments of their field"; it is at the heart of their enterprise. Secondly, adherence to the "myth of transience" allows our administrators to "keep at bay" the recognition that, at institutions such as ours, basic writers are a large and persistent constituency who will not be eliminated by "enrollment management," whose existence must be acknowledged, and whose educational needs must be addressed by some means other than temporary expedients. The ENG 071 program serves only further to marginalize basic writers and their instructors, to exclude them from full admission into the university community, making the promise of access to higher education a cynical hoax.

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Team-Grading in College Composition

Nedra Grogan and Donald A. Daiker

Nearly every director of a first-year college writing program can anticipate problems related to writing assessment. The sources of these problems may be varied—a department chair or dean concerned that grades in college composition courses deviate unsatisfactorily from the all-department or all-college average; colleagues who believe that graduate assistants are undermining the quality of education by consistently assigning grades that are too high; graduate assistants who are unsure of their grading criteria; and students who are absolutely convinced that their instructor is paid by the amount of red ink she uses and promoted by the number of papers she fails.

Here at Miami University we have tried to address several of these problems by instituting a program in team grading within the first-year composition sequence.* For the past four years now, a group of instructors has met twice each semester in order to evaluate papers written by students in composition sections other than their own. In what follows, we would like to outline a procedure for establishing a program in team grading and to suggest how such a program benefits students and teachers while contributing significantly to learning.

To get started requires a writing program director willing either to become program coordinator or to recruit one. The coordinator's first step is to secure the approval of the department chair and other influential administrators—both because their endorsement encourages others to participate and because they are able to pick up the minimal costs (duplicating, secretarial help, refreshments) that team grading entails. Once the coordinator makes clear that team grading is a powerful yet inexpensive form of faculty development that simultaneously addresses problems of grade inflation and grading consistency, administrative support generally follows. An optional next step is for the coordinator to appoint a faculty member or graduate student as associate coordinator or chief reader.

Recruiting Colleagues

To achieve the sense of community that Edward White reminds us is so vital to a successful essay reading (24), program leaders should recruit only colleagues who want to participate. Forced participation will not work. Indeed, our only unsuccessful experience in team grading occurred

when we *required* all first-year graduate assistants to take part in the program. The result was a day of long faces, resentful comments, and low reliability scores. Now we *invite* participation—with a departmental memorandum, sent well before the semester begins to enable instructors to include information about team grading in their course syllabus. The memo gives two dates for team grading and describes the key points of the program:

1. Instructors may participate in one or both team-grading sessions.

We schedule one session on a Saturday at mid-term and a second session on the Saturday before final exam week. The two sessions are run identically but independently. For instructors using the portfolio approach, mid-term team grading enables their students to get an early evaluative response to their papers. For all instructors, participating in a finals-week session can reduce the drudgery of semester-end grading done alone.

2. Instructors may require or make optional student participation in team grading.

Some instructors require their students to submit a paper or two for team grading; some even specify which paper is to be submitted. But most of us make student participation completely optional. Each student decides for herself whether to participate and, if so, how many papers to submit.

3. Instructors may use the results of team grading in whatever way they choose.

Although participating instructors must attend a training session and eventually "agree to common standards for the sake of the test" (White 25), they are free to determine how the results of team grading will affect course grades. For some instructors, particularly those who have not previously evaluated the paper, the team grading score becomes the paper score; for others, the team grading score is averaged with the original score; and for most of us, the team grading score counts only if it is higher than the original score.

4. Each paper will be read as a response to an open assignment—

unless the assignment is specified (25 words or less) at the top of the first page.

5. All papers will be graded holistically—that is, with a "quick,

impressionistic qualitative procedure for sorting or ranking samples of writing" (Charney 67)—on a scale of A+ to F following standard practices of the Educational Testing Service. Readers will be trained in scoring procedures on the morning of the grading session following procedures described in Odell and Cooper (36-38), White (163-67), and Myers (42-46). Each paper will be read and scored by two different readers and, in instances of a discrepancy (more than a full grade difference in scores), by a third reader. All scores will be reported to the instructor—and to no one else.

6. Each instructor may submit up to 60 papers. Limiting submissions prevents the unfair and awkward situation of one colleague's submitting three times as many papers as another.

Pre-Scoring Procedures

Before papers submitted for team grading can be evaluated, they must be collected, randomized, and coded. Although every program can devise its own procedures, careful arrangements need to be made to ensure anonymity of the writer and the classroom teacher and to make sure each graded paper finds its way back to the right teacher and student. This can be done by assigning instructor codes (a two-digit number) and paper numbers (a six-digit random number either computer-generated or copied from tables found in statistics textbooks). To give each submitted paper two readings, the classroom teachers who will be participating are divided into two roughly equal "teams," with each instructor's papers going over to the opposite team. The two teams' papers must be kept separate so that no instructor reads a paper from her own class.

In addition to paper preparation, other preliminary procedures include selecting the sample papers—the range finders—to be used to train readers (Daiker and Grogan). Two or three days in advance, the most experienced participating instructors submit several unmarked papers that they find especially appropriate as range finders. The chief reader then duplicates these papers and convenes a meeting to select one or two papers for each letter grade.

Each team-grading program must, of course, determine its own scoring criteria and scoring scale. We depart from the standard ETS six-point and nine-point numerical scales in favor of traditional letter grades—A+ through F. While letter grades are a distraction in most holistic evaluation sessions, they are a known reality in college composition courses; thus, we follow the system familiar to teachers and students alike. That way, students need not learn the meaning of a "5," and teachers need not convert numbers into letter grades.

The Team-Grading Session

The reading follows ETS procedures for a holistic evaluation session: the chief reader introduces the scoring scale and descriptive criteria and then leads raters through the individual scoring and group discussion of the anchor papers. Readers practice making quick, impressionistic judgments without making any corrections or revisions in the papers (Cooper 3). Once readers are calibrated, or in agreement, "live" papers are distributed and the actual scoring begins.

As in any holistic scoring session, the length of a reading depends on how many papers each participant must evaluate. If participants each bring sixty papers to team grading, a team-grading session that includes a calibration period of sixty to ninety minutes will take approximately eight hours. If colleagues hesitate to invest an entire work day in reading papers, it's useful to remind them of the time they spend—all alone in offices or dens—grading one, two, or three sets of papers. Team grading may take a full day of work on Saturday, but it leaves Saturday night and all day Sunday free for family, fun, or anything other than grading papers.

Advantages of Team Grading

A team-grading program offers advantages for students, instructors, and the writing program. Students are informed about this optional evaluation plan at the beginning of the term (thus the importance of a memo to faculty before they plan their course syllabi) and are introduced to team grading as an incentive for them to rethink and revise papers that have already been evaluated: students are less likely to regard graded papers as "over and done with" if they are offered a chance to rewrite them and given a shot at a higher grade. Finally, a team-grading program in which student participation is optional empowers students to make a series of important decisions. For each piece of writing students produce, they must decide whether or not to submit it for evaluation by instructors other than their own. And for each paper they submit, they must also decide upon the nature and extent of their revision. Team grading, like portfolio grading, places key educational decisions squarely in the hands of student writers.

Many advantages of team grading for students accrue to instructors as well. Most importantly, team grading helps us do a better job of teaching writing. It does so primarily by encouraging our students to take a second and third look at their own writing in preparation for submitting it to a brand new audience of readers. But it also does so by helping us create a more positive classroom atmosphere. Morale is enhanced not simply because our students have been given more choices but also because the structure of team grading places instructors and students on the same side. In traditional grading, of course, it's difficult to avoid an adversarial relationship, the student submitting the paper on one side and the instructor evaluating it on the other. In team grading, by contrast, there is no reason why instructors cannot openly cheer for their students to come away with high grades. On the Monday when we make known the results of team grading, we warmly applaud our students who have improved their scores and commiserate with those who haven't. Whatever the results, we're together on this one.

Team grading is a further benefit to instructors—and students—in resolving disputed grades. Without team grading, a student who honestly questions a grade has limited options. Either she swallows her disbelief and disappointment, or she approaches the instructor with her problem. The latter poses risks, of course, since—even when tactfully presented—it may be taken as a direct challenge to an instructor's authority and competence. In earlier years when we invited students to resubmit disputed papers for regrading (by another instructor or by a group of students from the class), there were few takers—and they were virtually all male. Team grading removes the confrontational element from grade disputes. No longer is the student challenging or even questioning an instructor's taste or judgment; she is simply submitting her work—usually after it has been revised—to other readers. It is the same privilege reserved for us in the profession when our own work is not as kindly received as we had hoped.

At the same time that team grading affords students new opportunities for writing and response, it allows instructors to retain a significant amount of autonomy and control. Since all participating instructors help determine grading criteria through their responses to sample papers, the grading standards applied at any team-grading session will obviously reflect the group's point of view. Once the team-grading session ends, however, individual instructors are free to use the results of team grading in whatever way they choose. That is, each instructor has the choice of using one or both grades that a student receives from team grading. Indeed, one regular Miami participant guarantees an "A" to any paper that receives an "A" from *either* evaluator. The individual instructor also determines the relationship between the grades received during team grading and the paper's original grade: some instructors average the two grades, but most of us count only the higher between 1) the original score and 2) the average of the two team-grading scores. The latter arrangement enables us accurately to describe team grading as a "no-lose" proposition, a riskless opportunity for students to better their semester average and to experiment boldly with new forms of writing. Each instructor gives different color to team grading by determining how its results affect semester grades.

But since team grading is an effective means of controlling grade inflation and grading inconsistency, its benefits extend beyond the classroom to the writing program and the department. Team grading addresses grade inflation in two ways: by establishing high standards of evaluation and by building teacher confidence. Colleagues tell us that they apply higher standards during team grading than when evaluating papers submitted in their own courses: they estimate the difference to be between a third and half a grade. So the course paper that receives a "B+" is likely to fare no better than a "B" or "B-" from team grading. Anonymous grading tends to depress scores slightly. Even more important for

reducing grade inflation is that team grading enhances the self-confidence of participating instructors, especially inexperienced ones. Since an obvious source of grade inflation is insecurity—an instructor who questions her own judgment may hesitate to assign low grades for fear that she cannot justify them, an equally obvious remedy is to build confidence by enabling instructors to compare their evaluations with their colleagues'. Such confidence building is a major function of the calibration period that opens each team-grading session.

Calibration is also the primary instrument for achieving consistency in grading. As instructors evaluate and then discuss a series of sample papers, they invariably move closer to consensus in terms of both what scoring criteria to apply and what scores to assign. Whether an instructor's initial scores are too high, too low, or simply inconsistent, the gentle force of peer pressure characteristically nudges her in the direction of her colleagues. It stands to reason that at least some of what is learned during calibration will carry over to other evaluative tasks. Indeed, White is convinced that the holistic essay reading integral to team grading provides "the most effective in-service training for the teaching of writing yet discovered" (166).

Some Limitations of Team Grading

Notwithstanding its contribution to an effective writing program, team grading has several real limitations. Perhaps the two most crucial involve scoring reliability and student perceptions. Problems with reliability arise because, unlike most holistic scoring sessions, raters are not evaluating responses to a single prompt but to several different ones, including free choice. Indeed, within a typical scoring session, raters evaluate papers that differ not only in topic but in kind as well: a story about the championship soccer game may be followed by an explanatory essay on antique furniture or a persuasive piece on the treatment of AIDS victims. Given such variety in student writing, team-grading raters may not be able to achieve the scoring reliabilities possible with a single prompt (Cooper 19). During actual scoring sessions, our discrepancy rate—the percentage of papers with two scores that differ by more than a full letter grade—ranges from ten to twelve percent.

If scoring reliability is made more difficult when students choose what to write—in part because it complicates the selection of sample papers, that fact has not prevented the widespread use of open assignments in large-scale assessment situations. Students are permitted virtual freedom, for example, in the "best writing" component of the NCTE Achievement Awards in Writing competition. They also have wide choice in the portfolio-based evaluation program of the State University of New York, Stony Brook: one portfolio item is "an academic essay of any

sort" (Elbow and Belanoff 98). Even the timid Educational Testing Service has suggested the inclusion of "a paper of the student's choice" within a writing portfolio designed for college admission (Camp 97). But while the absence of a prompt may lower scoring reliabilities, it probably enhances test validity: an assignment requiring students to discover what to say seems a more comprehensive and therefore more valid measure of writing competence than one in which the topic is chosen for them. Even if it were not for enhanced validity, the risk of lower reliability scores may be a small price to pay for gains in student motivation and class morale. Our responsibility as evaluators should not diminish our far more important responsibility as teachers.

A second crucial limitation of team grading involves student perceptions. Unless our students understand what team grading can and cannot do, it may confuse and even intimidate them. After all, the image of a room full of composition teachers grading papers does not bring immediate joy to most students' hearts. They may even feel, despite our talk about "real" audiences, that strangers have no business evaluating their writing. Some students are understandably more comfortable when their classroom teacher, who knows how hard they've worked, is the one dispensing grades. And they have some reason to be apprehensive, too, since—with author and assignment bias removed—team graders tend to score papers a notch lower than classroom teachers. If that's not bad enough, their papers are returned with only a grade—no comments, no justification, not even a suggestion for improvement. Without careful explanation, it would be possible for students to perceive team grading as part of the same pedagogical arsenal that includes standardized testing, detention halls, and dunce caps.

But once team grading is made voluntary, all its intimidating power is lost. So long as students are free to participate—if they want to raise their grades, if they want an early response to a piece in their portfolios, or if they simply want to know how others evaluate their work, they are in a better psychological position to understand what team grading does, and what it cannot do. What it does is to provide students a holistic evaluation of their work by two instructors trained in writing assessment. What it cannot do is explain the evaluation. But this is a limitation that students will accept so long as they know that written explanations would triple the time of grading sessions and cause even the most committed instructor to withdraw from the program. Team grading is feasible only because holistic evaluation allows papers to be read and scored in three to four minutes.

Team Grading in the Classroom

A good way to help students decide whether to participate in team grading is by involving them in a practice session. A class period devoted

to team grading not only gives students a realistic sense of the program's strengths and limitations but helps them develop their own evaluation criteria—useful both for responding to the writing of their classmates during peer workshops and for assessing and then revising their own written work. A practice team-grading session requires only three components: 1) a very brief overview of the principles of holistic assessment; 2) a description of the scoring scale and scoring criteria; and, most important, 3) a set of sample papers for students to read, score, and discuss. The overview quickly characterizes the essentials of holism: multiple, independent readings; a single overall score from each reader; anonymous scoring; trained readers from similar backgrounds; and a common scoring scale with explicit scoring criteria. Both the scoring scale and scoring criteria should reflect institutional practice: if the college catalog defines "A" as *excellent* and "C" as *satisfactory*, that's a good starting point for a more detailed description of points on the scoring scale.

But the heart of team grading in the classroom is a set of papers for students to score. Select three to five papers that range in quality from excellent to below average. If possible, they should be papers written by students other than your own; if not, keep their source and identity secret. Begin by distributing a single mid-range paper and asking students to evaluate it in terms of the scoring scale and scoring criteria. Students record their score anonymously on a slip of paper, fold it over, and pass it forward. All the scores are then read aloud one by one and recorded on the chalkboard. As anyone who has participated in holistic scoring knows, this is an exciting time: students are eager to discover how closely their own evaluation tallies with those of their classmates. Once the scores are recorded for all to see, discussion begins. Like a chief reader, the instructor may want to begin calibrating the students—moving both high and low raters toward the middle—so as to illustrate what takes place during an actual team-grading session. Following discussion, other student papers are distributed, scored, and discussed—one by one. By the end of the class period, students have a much clearer sense of what happens during a team-grading calibration period and, for that reason, of how papers are subsequently evaluated. They can now better appreciate the strengths and limitations of holistic evaluation, and they can more intelligently decide whether to submit one or more of their own papers for team grading. And if any student wants first-hand experience with holistic evaluation, she can be invited to observe the next team-grading session.

Although students may be the major beneficiaries of team grading in college composition, the writing program itself gains in substantial ways. First, team grading is a direct and effective way of addressing problems of grade inflation and grading inconsistency. Second, team grading helps build department morale by bringing graduate students and faculty

members together to perform a common task. Third, team grading contributes significantly to the professional development of faculty members in composition: extended discussions of student papers with our colleagues not only motivate us to reexamine our own values but to ask ourselves the kinds of questions that can lead to improved teaching and, on occasion, to an important research project. Finally, a program in team grading announces to the department and university that the writing program faculty willingly gave significant time and effort in order to fulfill their professional and teaching responsibilities. A team grading program helps create the kind of environment in which writing teachers and the teaching of writing flourish.

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Computers in the Composition Curriculum: Looking Ahead

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Many writing program administrators fight so long to get a computer lab or classroom for their program that they think the battle is over once the machines are in place. We would argue, however, that a strong computerized writing program focuses on writing, not on computer technology. Computers are only machines; their effectiveness depends on using them to reinforce the theories that inform our pedagogy. As writing program administrators, it is our responsibility to determine the role computers play in the teaching of writing.

If we are to make informed decisions about the role that computers should assume in a writing curriculum, we must discard the myths that have fed our love/hate relationship with computers. Instead of believing that computers will solve all of our problems or will create a depersonalized monster that we cannot control, we need to consider realistically how computers are likely to change writing programs in the future. In this article, we want to explore three ways in which we think computers will significantly affect the teaching of writing. First, computer-based classrooms will enable new forms of dialogue and collaboration among students. Second, new computerized research methods will give students greater access to information. And, finally, computer technology will change the way we perceive texts and the kinds of texts we create.

These changes are neither obvious nor dramatic. We are not predicting that computers will revolutionize writing programs or that they will necessitate a new pedagogy. But it would be naive to assume that computers will have no effect on teaching writing. The question is how. As writing program administrators, we can control how computers are used and determine the role they will play if we understand the types of changes to expect.

Computers and Collaborative Learning

One of the most tangible ways in which computers will affect the teaching of writing is to change the physical environment in which we teach. In the past, many schools created microcomputer labs or added computers to existing writing-center programs. Typically, students and teachers used these labs as an adjunct to the classroom. Although teachers usually

met with students in the lab initially to introduce them to the computers and the software programs, classes did not meet there. Instead the students scheduled lab time on an individual basis, often writing rough drafts of their papers with pen and paper and then taking the drafts to the lab to work on final drafts. Thus, the computers were separate from the students' primary learning and writing experiences. The teacher might talk about how to use the computers for writing, and the students might use them to produce and edit their final drafts, but the computers were not part of the classroom and, therefore, not part of the actual teaching environment.

As computer technology has become less expensive and less intimidating, many English departments have developed computer-based classrooms. These classrooms are equipped with a computer or terminal for each student. Ideally, the computers are connected to form a "network" on which writers communicate, intervene in one another's texts in a variety of ways, or create a text jointly. In such a classroom students use computers to plan and compose their texts as well as to edit and revise them. They do not view computers as fancy typewriters but as tools for writing.

This change from teacher-centered, to student-centered, computerized classrooms reinforces a model of teaching that most of us believe in but often fail to implement because the old model of lecturing is so firmly entrenched. As Aronowitz and Giroux remind us, the best teachers and tutors function not as authority figures but as "transformative intellectuals," who make "the pedagogical more political and the political more pedagogical" (36). Transformative intellectuals "take seriously the need to give students an active voice in their learning experiences" (37). Although in the past the computer has all too often merely been used to deliver predigested lessons to passive students, it has the potential to help a teacher generate among students an honest discussion about language and form and idea. The result can be a classroom in which students have a voice in what they are learning and why they are learning it. When a computer classroom is designed as a communication network, the teacher can use the computers to enable dialectic, to subvert order, to give students a voice with which to question or to make and support claims.

How might this happen? How might the teacher as transformative intellectual use the computer to engage in dialectic? One approach is to put class logs, or journals, on a computer network.* In the past, computer networks have most often been used as a lecture base or an information retrieval system. But they can also be used as a communication network that gives students access to one another. The students do not all have to be in one place at the same time to have a conversation. They can put their ideas on the network any time and send them out for others'

responses. They can even change the direction of the course, thus realizing the goals of a radical pedagogy in which students help determine the lessons and even the language of a course.

The networked class log can serve as an alternative to individual journals in which students write in isolation about concerns that ought to engage an entire class. Such journals do not enable dialogue. They merely reveal that the writer has worked through difficult problems and recorded discoveries, but, unless there is a way of sharing those discoveries, they remain for the teacher and student to read. As a result, no sense of community is created. In contrast, the networked class log allows an entire class to enter the conversation with the leisure to write out what they are thinking and ask peers for feedback rather than trying to enter into an oral class discussion that works for some and not for others. Using networked computers, these students see themselves and others as writers and thinkers.

Thus computers set up as communication networks hold promise for that radical pedagogy—one that does not abandon students to a predetermined lesson but allows them to engage in conversation, to write collaboratively, to ask honest questions, and to make their own judgments about what they and their classmates have read and written.

Computers and Research

Another way in which computers are changing writing programs is in the area of library research. In designing writing assignments, we typically ask our students to research topics in libraries where computers have radically changed once familiar research processes. It is not unusual today to see computer terminals in all areas of the library—reference, circulation, documents, and special collections. As writing program administrators, we need to be aware of the changes computers have made in the storage and retrieval of information so that we can incorporate instruction in computerized research methods into the writing curriculum.

In most libraries today, online catalogs, designed to provide access to library materials (circulation, cataloging, location of information), go beyond the capabilities of the traditional card catalog by allowing subject searching that is much more rapid and focused. Using an online catalog, a student can search for a combination of terms (e.g., women, 1980, and advertising; aerobic exercise and joint injuries; or religious rhetoric and television), thus narrowing to a specific topic early in their research. But students must be taught how to use such search capabilities, must learn how to operate the systems, and how to choose and enter appropriate search terminology. Therefore, first of all, writing program administrators must ascertain whether librarians or English teachers are going to be

responsible for providing the instruction students need. Then, through consultation with library staff, they must integrate this additional instruction into the appropriate courses in the writing curriculum.

In addition to online catalogs, online databases provide students with search capabilities once available only to trained librarians. Now, using a microcomputer terminal and CD-ROM technology, our students can search the ERIC online database, Compuserve, or ABI-INFORM. Most librarians readily agree to train faculty in online database searching; there is considerable debate about whether they should provide the same training for students (see, for example, Champlin, Hamilton, Dreifuss, Deschene, and Penhale and Taylor). Some fear that students who use these searches will not formulate their own research questions but rather will allow the machines to formulate easily answerable questions for them. Others are concerned that students may find the computer mechanism itself a barrier to the research process and thus may become sidetracked or frustrated. However, our students' futures include databases of information, and the key to unlocking this information will be a knowledge of how to access it. In collaboration with library staff, we can give them this knowledge.

Ideally, students need to learn these information-retrieval skills as an integrated part of their course work. Library instruction that is divorced from actual class assignments is largely ineffectual. So we need to cooperate with librarians to provide our students in each writing class with an increasingly more sophisticated knowledge of computerized research methods.

For example, most first-semester writing courses emphasize expository and persuasive writing assignments requiring documented information for development and support of their arguments. Students at this level can learn some basic library terminology and how to use computerized databases. Working together, teachers and library staff can introduce them to the library and provide some hands-on experience with the online catalog and the Infotrac database (which indexes primarily magazines and journals in the popular press).

In a second-semester writing course, in which students write documented research papers, library instruction needs to focus on more sophisticated, subject-specific research tools (both in print and online) such as ERIC or ABI-INFORM. At this level students can learn to use the online catalog to find relevant government documents or to use the business databases to locate corporate information.

In an advanced writing or technical writing course, students can begin using the computerized tools within their own disciplines to locate and retrieve information. Library instruction at this level needs to be more specialized. For example, if librarians are willing, they can walk small

groups of students through model searches in their fields. This kind of immediate, hands-on instruction is particularly valuable to advanced students.

Using computers for information storage and retrieval will be an essential skill for writers in the future. As writing program directors, we need to educate our faculty about these new research methods, encouraging them to work with library staff members to give students access to the information that is available to them.

Computers and the Text

In addition to changing how we teach and how our students learn, computers are changing our perception of a text. The very fact that a writer can modify a computerized text with minimal effort reinforces the concept of a text as an evolving, dynamic phenomenon rather than a fixed, static entity. Because a computer text can be changed so easily and quickly, a writer begins to think of it not as fixed and constant but as fluid, much as a text that exists in human memory.

Even more significant is the effect that computers may have on our perception of how a text should be organized. Traditionally, western discourse has been organized in a linear fashion, with one idea or event leading naturally or logically to the next. A new computer phenomenon known as hypertext has challenged our traditional assumptions of the value of linearity. Hypertext was initially conceived as "a way to link interrelated information so computer users could jump from topic to topic, find related subject areas, and generally extract only what they needed from large quantities of information" (Hershey 244). In other words, instead of arranging information so that it is presented to the reader in a linear sequence, writers create what Stephen Tchudi describes as "a multi-layered multimedia, computer-accessed compilation of data and visual images" (27). The reader, rather than the writer, then determines what data to read and in what order.

Although it is tempting to think of hypertext as lack of organization, it is more accurately viewed as an alternate method of organization, one that is not based on linearity. In a reassuring analogy, David Burrell compares hypertext to a conversation:

We've actually been speaking hypertext all our lives and never knew it. It's essentially nonlinearity of speech. The fact that pages have to be numbered because of the way books are built has led us into thinking that things need to be in sequence. (30)

Thus, with hypertext writers and readers can explore a topic in a fashion similar to that of two people engaged in a conversation. The writer supplies a body of information, and the reader gains "access" to that information in the manner that best suits his or her purposes.

Perhaps less dramatic but potentially more significant is the increased importance of document design that results when writers use computers. In an excellent *College Composition and Communication* article of 1986, Stephen Bernhardt urges composition teachers to do what technical writing teachers have done for some time now—to make students aware of the visual as well as the verbal features of a text. Not only does computer technology make this task easier, it makes it necessary. For, as Ben and Marthalee Barton have warned, because of the graphics capabilities of new computers, "our concerns with the characteristic under-use of visuals in student [papers] may well give way to its opposite" ("Toward a Rhetoric of Visuals" 136).

With or without our help, students will want to use (or overuse) the ever more inexpensive, freely available, and easily learned graphics packages and word processing programs that permit wide variations in illustration, format, and layout. The new "desktop publishing" programs create opportunities for document design that will prove inviting, if not irresistible, to students who grew up with *Time* and *USA Today*, not to mention television and modern advertising, which Marshall McLuhan characterizes as an "iconic" and "mosaic" replacement of traditional linear text (227). WPAs should look upon visual composition not as one more thing to add to a crowded curriculum, but as an opportunity—an opportunity not only to expand our students' textual awarenesses but also to enrich the composition curriculum with new theories from cognitive science (in the manner of Rubens, Rude, and Spyridakis and Standal), rhetoric (as in the work of Killingsworth and Gilbertson), and semiotics (see especially Barton and Barton, "Simplicity in Visual Representation," Barthes, and Silverman 14-25).

As rhetoricians we know that, with each alteration in a text, something is both lost and gained. Students eager to experiment with computer-generated graphic variations may produce a text that is visually exciting but rhetorically vacuous. But they need to be encouraged to view a text as a visual as well as a linguistic phenomenon. For example, there are several visual alternatives to the traditional essay format, including replacement of sentences with high-density graphics like tables and charts, the use of numbered or bulleted lists, use of headings and structural markers, and so on. (See Appendix for a more complete list).

With the possible exception of inserting photographs, for which a good optical scanner is needed, all of the options listed on the chart are made possible by readily available, relatively inexpensive software. Computer technology has thus hastened the time when composition must incorpo-

rate extraverbal communication—regardless of the artificial and increasingly meaningless divisions of college curricula that segregate skill in graphics from skill in writing. As film studies and mass media analyses have taught students to become more sophisticated consumers (interpreters) of visual texts, so we must help them to become effective producers of text by concentrating on the integration of visual discourse with verbal discourse.

Conclusion

Writing in the future, and we are not speaking here of the distant future but one that we realize daily, will increasingly involve writing with a computer. To be sure that our programs benefit from increasing computer technology, we, as WPAs, must be flexible enough to accommodate technological changes as they occur. The one constant factor in dealing with computers is change. As writing program administrators, we must try to keep informed of the changes and to react appropriately to them. If we react precipitously, we may well end up with programs and machines that we cannot use. If, on the other hand, we fail to take advantage of opportunities to acquire new hardware and software, we may not have what we need when we need it.

One way to keep informed of new products and developments is, of course, to keep up with scholarship in the field. Another is to communicate with other programs on our campuses that use computers, such as information services, computer centers, and business schools. Still another is to become part of a national network system such as Bitnet, which allows us to communicate easily and inexpensively with other WPAs who are using computers. And, finally, we can encourage our departments to hire at least one faculty member with computer expertise, who can then function as a support to the entire department, especially to the writing program as it expands its use of computers.

The love/hate relationship that we have been carrying on with computers is not a productive one. Falling in love with the technology or with the myth that computers will automatically improve our students' writing or make our jobs easier only leads to disillusionment and blinds us to the computer's real value. Rejecting the idea that computers can be a powerful teaching and writing tool is equally unproductive and constitutes a denial of the reality that confronts us.

A computer in and of itself creates neither good nor bad writers, nor does it guarantee either conservative or radical pedagogy. It is, however, a very powerful writing and teaching tool that can be effectively used or abused. It can merely deliver prescriptive lessons on grammar and mechanics, or it can enable students to construct their own meaning; it can take the place of a teacher, or it can enhance the teacher's effective-

ness; it can isolate students, or it can create a dialogue among students. The computer is most useful when it is part of a sophisticated, comprehensive program of instruction that is designed by writing program administrators who know how to use computers to put sound writing theory into practice.

*We are indebted to Marilyn Cooper for providing access to the computer logs generated by her students on a computer network.

Appendix

Alteration in Traditional Text	Possible Advantages	Possible Drawbacks
replacement of sentences with high-density graphics, like tables & charts	accessibility, summarizing power, condensation, new sense of relations structured along an x-y axis	loss of coherence (too many graphics), loss of explanatory or analytical power (too few sentences), danger of reader "saturation"
use of numbered or bulleted lists	increased accessibility & readability	loss of coherence (too many lists), lack of sentence variety, ineffective subordination
use of headings, running heads, other structural markers, & information locators	new structural integrity, increased accessibility & readability	inadequate attention to transitions, neglect of verbal devices of structure
addition of functional diagrams, flow charts, & maps	freedom from linear constraints of traditional text, flexibility in showing complex relationships (such as simultaneity and recursion)	undervaluation of descriptive and imagistic power of language, decreased experimentation with figures of speech
addition of cartoons, photographs, & other icons that highlight or illuminate points of text	additional impact for important points, increased power to control tone (adding a light touch with cartoons, emotional impact with photos)	improper emphasis (text to be illustrated selected because of "visual possibilities instead of substantive significance—cf. TV news)
variations in font & type face	new power of emphasis, visual representation of textual hierarchies, & subject matter distinctions	neglect of traditional linguistic & rhetorical means of emphasis, introduction of distractions in "busy" text

Alteration in Traditional Text

inclusion of boxes containing nonessential but marginally interesting or helpful text

Possible Advantages

freedom from strict demands of thematic unity

Possible Drawbacks

failures of selectivity, uncontrolled inclusion of distractions, "competing text"

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The Disabled Student and the Writing Program: A Guide for Administrators

Susan McLeod and Kathy Jane Garretson

Much thought and effort has recently gone into making college campuses physically accessible for disabled students. Wheelchair ramps have appeared in front of buildings, drinking fountains have been lowered, restrooms and parking lots are clearly marked for handicapped access, and elevators now have Braille markings next to the floor buttons. Not as much attention, however, has been given to adjusting classroom practices to make learning itself more accessible to disabled students. Administrators need to give this matter their attention, not only because it is fair and just, but also because it is the law: institutions or programs receiving federal financial assistance are legally bound to set up "academic adjustments" in the classroom so that disabled students are not discriminated against in their efforts to learn ("Nondiscrimination"). Because of the format and labor-intensive nature of most writing classes, and because composition is the one class nearly every college student takes, writing program administrators in particular need one class nearly every college to plan for such academic adjustments in order to smooth the way for disabled students.

Before discussing what constitutes reasonable accommodation in the writing classroom, however, let us first clarify what is meant by the term "disabled." The most obvious type of disability is physical: the blind or deaf student, the mobility-challenged student in a wheelchair or with impaired muscle coordination. But there are other disabilities which are not so obvious. There are disabilities related to health: students with heart problems, for example, or with diseases like Lupus or Epstein-Barr, which are unpredictable and often bring about extreme fatigue. There are also disabilities related to treatable emotional disorders: the manic-depressive who used to be unable to function in a school environment is now able, thanks to medication, to attend classes. Finally, there are various learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, which we are just now beginning to understand and to learn to deal with in the college classroom.

What kinds of classroom accommodation are reasonable? A general guideline in working with disabled students is this: the student must achieve the goals and objectives of the course like any other student, but the process by which those goals are achieved may be modified to fit the student's particular abilities and needs. What we will do here is first

outline some issues that should be addressed in setting forth guidelines for teachers, and then discuss how to implement these guidelines in a writing program. (We have appended the guidelines distributed to all teachers at our institution.)

First, before anything else is done, the individual disabled student should be consulted about his or her needs. These students have usually developed individual coping strategies and are usually straightforward in discussing their needs when the instructor is honestly open to negotiating the process of instruction: how the student will receive instruction and demonstrate knowledge and competence. Not every disabled student will require accommodation; each should be consulted on a case-by-case basis.

Second, the issues of time and location should be addressed. It sometimes takes disabled students longer to complete assignments; last-minute changes in assignments or timed writing tasks create hardships for them. Teachers should be sure to give these students plenty of lead time, and in the case of in-class essays, arrange for them to have more time to complete the task. Sometimes students who work slowly might have to take incompletes and finish term papers during semester breaks. Students with chronic health problems sometimes miss class more often than the attendance policy would allow; teachers should work out ahead of time what such students need to do to make up the work missed. Some learning-disabled students find noise and movement very distracting or become hyperactive under stress and need to move around; such students will do better if allowed to work in private—in the teacher's office or in a nearby classroom—rather than in a group-editing configuration.

Third, the use of technology needs established guidelines. Some disabled students find it difficult to listen and take notes at the same time; the tape recorder is a natural device for them to use, and teachers need to accept such devices and to check with students occasionally to make sure the recordings are audible enough to be helpful. Blind students may need to bring Braille equipment on which to do their in-class writing so that they can then read it aloud to their teacher or to editing groups; sometimes special arrangements need to be made so that they can use that equipment comfortably—on a table rather than on a desk, for example. The advent of the microcomputer has been an enormous boon to disabled students; when at all possible, arrangements should be made for disabled students to use word processing programs (complete with spelling checker) for their written work. Technology can also be used to help disabled students in very simple ways. Blue, dittoed handouts, for example, are very difficult for visually-impaired and dyslexic students to read; sharp-contrast Xerox sheets are much better. Large type is helpful, too, for those teachers who have access to IBM typewriters, wordprocessors with various fonts, or enlarging copy machines.

Once such guidelines have been worked out, how can they be implemented in the writing classroom? The key to developing successful accommodation techniques has been, we have found, a close working relationship between the writing program administrator and an administrator in the office for disabled student services (DSS). (If such an office does not exist on every campus, there is usually someone in the student affairs office who handles support systems for disabled students.) This relationship can be mutually beneficial; the WPA can provide expertise about what is and is not acceptable accommodation in the writing classroom, and the DSS administrator can provide useful information about disabilities to educate the WPA and the composition faculty. We have appended to this paper a list of resources we have found useful.

Once a working relationship has been established, it is useful to invite the DSS representative to a faculty meeting or TA orientation to raise the issue of accommodation for disabled students. Most faculty are favorably disposed toward helping disabled students, but many do not know quite how to go about it; sometimes they feel embarrassed to ask. Sometimes they feel that by making allowances for some students they are not being fair to others. We have found that detailing various options helps faculty understand that they can make allowances for disabilities in ways that are fair to the other students in the class. We have also found that by going over the signs of dyslexia in some sample papers, faculty have been able to help identify students who have been heretofore undiagnosed, and we have been able to get those students to testing and special help.

After such a meeting, we have found it useful for scheduling and advising purposes to identify teachers who are willing to work with disabled students, particularly those who are willing to work with some of the students with disabilities that take more extra-curricular time (blindness, for example) so that we may arrange for them to work directly with the DSS office. These latter teachers sometimes need to go the extra mile, selecting texts early to allow time for them to be recorded, providing extra copies of assignments for tutors, scheduling extra conferences with students. Not all faculty are willing to spend the extra time, so it is useful to know before the semester begins which faculty you can depend on. Identifying teachers in this way can ease the registration process for disabled students.

Once teachers are identified, they need to understand not only the general guidelines for accommodating disabled students mentioned above, they also need to be aware of three issues of particular importance in the writing class. The first is the fact that, because of the emphasis on students' self esteem at the secondary level, disabled students have generally had limited experience with writing in high school—their

teachers have not wanted to embarrass them by asking them to do something they could not do easily. Allowances have been made for these students that have not always been in their best interests; their writing skills are, as a result, even less developed than the average first-year student. The second issue is the use of human resources in the classroom (interpreters, transcribers, readers, tutors, editors) to help disabled students. In a class with a lecture format, the use of such resources is fairly straightforward, but in a writing class invariably the question arises, who is doing the written work, the student or the helper? There is no easy way to answer this question, and the WPA needs to work closely with the teacher and the DSS office, establishing parameters for each particular case. In one instance, for example, a dyslexic student and her reader both enrolled for credit in a technical writing class. They sat together, he helped her in their editing group (reading her paper aloud for her), but they wrote on different topics for each assignment. Because the teacher monitored the written assignments from the rough to the finished stages, she knew that the work was definitely the dyslexic student's own. (This was, incidentally, a student who had learned to read just two years before, when she was nineteen years old.) Sometimes the WPA needs to remind teachers that we all need help with editing, and that disabled students simply need more help, in one way or another, than the rest; this should not obscure the fact that they can still compose.

Which brings us to a more controversial issue—alternatives to written composition. In a very few cases, writing teachers dealing with disabled students may sometimes have to accept compositions which are oral rather than written in their origins—ones which have been dictated to someone else to transcribe. When one thinks about it, however, this is not so controversial after all. This method is one used in business and government all the time; why shouldn't we allow some students a composing method that is standard procedure outside the academy? We are beginning to understand that there are multiple composing strategies that students can use successfully; this is in fact just one more strategy, different in manner rather than in kind. And as John Herum points out, contrary to what the present notions about the differences between oral and written speech might tell us, there is no evidence that dictation lowers the quality of the finished written product (10).

Once the guidelines are in place and teachers are working individually with disabled students, the WPA must be ready to work with the DSS office to counsel students and facilitate communication with teachers. Disabled students sometimes learn to be very good passive learners. Because the process-oriented composition class emphasizes active learning, such students find themselves in uncharted waters, needing reassurance as well as accommodation. A few disabled students have learned to be quite manipulative; a WPA must be ready to deal with situations

where students use their disabilities as excuses for not doing the work in the course or blame the teacher for not helping enough. A blind student, for example, simply refused to take advantage of the accommodation offered, missed class frequently, and did not turn in the required number of papers. A sighted student would fail in such a situation; the blind student did too. In another case, a learning-disabled student began to blame the teacher in a disruptive way, saying that her difficulties with writing were a result of his unclear instructions and his useless suggestions for revision. She was removed from the class and finished the semester through individual tutorials in the writing lab; we used a different tutor each time, so that she could not attach blame to any given authority and could focus instead on her own composing. In such cases, working in tandem with the DSS office is crucial, since the WPA needs to understand how much of the difficulty is due to real disability and how much is due to interpersonal or other factors.

But we do not want to end on a negative note. Working to help accommodate disabled students is not just a matter of complying with the law; it is also a matter of simple human concern. And like most human concerns with which we deal, it can have rewards far beyond the amount of work it may generate. To us, one of the most interesting by-products of working together to meet the needs of disabled students has been the informal faculty development that takes place as a result. We have been gratified by the interest teachers have shown in learning more about their students' disabilities and by the satisfaction they express in working with these students. It is a fact and not a truism that the disabled have much to teach us—about different learning and writing styles, about persistence, and about what we will call, for lack of a better word, courage.

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Appendix

Helping Students with a Disability: Some Guidelines for Teachers

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1. Last-minute assignments can cause serious hardship for handicapped students since it takes longer for them to obtain and use needed resources. Provide the student with a maximum amount of lead time for preparation of assignments.
2. When using charts, graphs, or other visual aids, try to provide an individual copy of information contained therein for the manually, visually, or hearing-impaired student. Read aloud all material written on the chalkboard or displayed via an overhead projector.
3. The disabled student may need another class member to take notes. The Disabled Student Service staff can give suggestions as to how to accomplish this.
4. When possible, offer to provide a copy of lecture outlines or notes for the manually, visually, or hearing-impaired student.
5. Generally, handicapped students should be allowed extra time to complete tests. Blind and learning-disabled students may take tests either orally or by typing responses to spoken or taped questions. The most appropriate method of administering a test depends on the student's disability and on the test content.
6. If a student is using a tape recorder, remember to speak clearly and toward the class.
7. Some legally blind students are not totally blind, so handouts should be in sharp black print on white paper. Dittos cannot be picked up by the special reading equipment used. Make written comments or grade marks on papers or exams with a black felt-tipped pen. Arrange for a designated sighted student to tell a visually-impaired student about class handouts.
8. When relocation of a classroom is necessary, a note on the chalkboard or door will not be seen by the visually-impaired student. Have a sighted student wait for the visually-impaired student to arrive and walk with him/her to the newly designated classroom. Allow extra time for the disabled student to reach the new classroom.
9. When providing direction to a blind student, talk first and then offer your arm. Do not pat working dogs or talk to them without permission from the owner.
10. Face the class when speaking to help the hearing-impaired student. Write key points on the chalkboard, and hand out class assignments on paper.
11. Be flexible about deadlines and attendance in developing grading schemes so as not to jeopardize the evaluation of a student with a chronic health problem.

Cold-Fusion and The Road Less Travelled: A Review of *Developing Successful College Writing Programs* (Edward M. White, Jossey-Bass, 1989)

Chris Anderson

When I first picked up Ed White's *Developing Successful College Writing Programs*, I was hoping, secretly—as I always do when I see a book with this kind of authority and scope, a book by a senior person respected in the field—I was hoping for answers, for magic. What I secretly wanted was a new formula or grand scheme to help me out of the day-to-day messiness of being a WPA at a state university. And because White is well known for his work in assessment, I also had a complex expectation about the "database" that might support the book, an expectation typical, I suspect, of WPAs nonetheless uneasy about empirical research: maybe there's an answer here after all, something hard and fast, something provable. Maybe all of us gooey types, all of us publicly dismissive of empiricism, secretly hope for some composition equivalent of cold-fusion—unlimited power with lots less energy going in, and that's why we keep reading and writing books and articles and texts about how to teach writing.

Of course that's exactly what White doesn't deliver. *Developing Successful College Writing Programs* is more the composition equivalent of Scott Peck's best-selling *The Road Less Travelled*, which begins with the oddly reassuring line, "Life is difficult"—reassuring because we don't then think there's something out there we're supposed to know and don't, some key we've missed that everyone else has. We can settle down to work.

White's purpose in the book is to review current program research, discuss the issues most pressing for writing programs, and in the end make practical recommendations for running writing programs. As Richard Lloyd-Jones says in his foreword, "almost nothing about writing program administration is otherwise available in an accessible form."

Part of the value of the book is that it brings together research we haven't had a chance to review and assimilate ourselves. Here, clearly summarized and carefully explained, are the methods and conclusions of the Kitzhaber report on composition, the Wilcox survey, the Austin Research Project, the California Project (which White himself directed;

see *Research in Effective Teaching of Writing*), the Connolly and Vilardi survey, the Hartzog survey, and George Hillocks' important review of empirical research, *Research on Written Composition: New Directions for Teaching*. The third chapter, "Strengths and Weaknesses of Approaches," evaluates the six approaches to writing instruction developed by the California Project and the patterns of composition instruction developed by Hillocks, providing WPAs with a number of useful terms and schemas. Chapters 5, 6, and 10 take up the issue of assessment, drawing heavily on White's influential study, *Teaching and Assessing Writing*. White's approach in these chapters, as throughout the book, is to summarize, explain, and review, so that WPAs (like me) who are behind in their reading about assessment can catch up in short order. It's very useful.

Another part of the value of the book is that it expresses so well what we already believe about composition pedagogy and theory. Program administration in writing is necessarily grounded in pedagogical theory; much of this reads like White's version of what Imscher, Lindemann, and many others say in their overviews of composition theory in general. There's a fine definition of writing in the first chapter, for example: "Writing is important, even central, to liberal education because writing stimulates (even as it records), the processes of learning, thinking, discovering, combining, evaluating, and imagining" (6). Chapter 4, "Writing Within the Undergraduate Curriculum," contains one ringing affirmation after another of the new rhetorical paradigm and the accumulated wisdom of the last twenty years.

Still another part of the book's value is that it brings to one place a set of practical recommendations for program administration. In this sense reading the book is much like going through a WPA evaluators' visit (not surprising, since White is a WPA evaluator of long standing). There is the same balanced, commonsensical advice about statements of purpose, syllabus construction, assessment, TA training. There's the same polemic about the low status of writing instructors and WPAs, always good to hear again. There's the same measured effort to provide options rather than prescribe one method applicable to all programs. White also simply gathers some useful material and information, including the text of the Wyoming Resolution and the WPA Guidelines for Self-Study.

In other words, there's nothing new here exactly, and at first that's a disappointment. On second thought, that's a real strength. It's a question of what was oft thought but ne'er so well expressed or put together. For an audience of experienced WPAs the value of *Developing Successful College Writing Programs* is that it clarifies, synthesizes, and reinforces. How many of us could express so wisely and so well what we take as

central about what we do, as, for example, this passage, one of my favorites in the book:

The place of writing at the center of the liberal arts undergraduate curriculum derives from its double role as a socializing discipline (enforcing and confirming student membership in the educated community) and as an individualizing discipline (demanding critical thinking and an active relation of the self to material under study). While both of these functions are important, the second one is more significant for the undergraduate curriculum. That is, writing instruction becomes a *liberating* activity—and hence properly an essential part of the liberal arts—when it demands and rewards thinking for oneself. (62)

Yes! That's it! That's what I've been trying to say. The book is a fine, wise, experienced introduction to the field, explaining clearly and in one place all that we know now from experience and research about the teaching of writing and the administering of writing programs. For an audience of administrators, the book is a godsend. Instead of stuttering and stammering at the next dean's meeting, we can put this book in their hands, or we can quote from it to write persuasive proposals and reports. All the key ideas of the new rhetoric are expressed here with authority and weight, a sense of prestige and experience.

The deeper effect of White expressing so well what has oft been thought is to remind us again that there are no easy, no hidden answers. One of our main responses to the book—as to a WPA evaluators' report, I think—is to say, "Heh! Wait a minute, I already knew all this" or, "Of course those are the options! I want to know what to *do*." But that's the necessary response, it seems to me, the point of conversion. On the one hand, we are empowered by White's synthesis, assured that we already have the available tools for doing the job. On the other hand, we are brought back to reality. No clouds will part, White keeps telling us, no bushes burn. WPAs must resign themselves to the muddle, learning from the real advances that are occasionally made, but by-and-large, simply doing the best they can with what they've got, responding to the concrete moment, adapting to all the stubborn contexts.

This is also the message implicit in White's treatment of empirical research, and for me the most powerful effect of *Developing Successful College Writing Programs*. White sets up the book to emphasize the move from research to practice, carefully laying out the existing empirical studies in the first few chapters and then exploring how and whether this research can justify specific recommendations about both pedagogy and administration. But in his own particular recommendations, White is continually falling back on commonsense and conviction and personal experience. After all the surveying of the research models and the California study and the questionnaires and the control groups, we get statements like

(statements I for one completely agree with): "Perhaps I am extrapolating too much from my own experience with composition faculty outside English, but I think that writing teachers have to be the most sensitive readers in the university" (37); or "While I have no respect for ignorance or for the foolish repetition of workbook formulas that some teachers mistake for instruction in writing, I have a great deal of respect for much of the teaching of writing that my English colleagues do" (38). In Chapter 3, after weighing in great detail the strengths and weaknesses of the six different approaches to composition surveyed in the California Project, White simply asserts:

"I, for example, am firmly committed to the text-based rhetoric approach, because that approach works best for me and my students at my institution" (55).

At first there seems to be a gap here, a gap that I think is typical of much composition research. Too often in the articles that keep getting published in our journals, a complex research design, announced with much solemn scientism, is followed by commonsense recommendations that could have been made without all the statistics or ethnographic description, or assertions get made that are not justified by the empirical research, that reflect finally the author's own values and rhetorical paradigm. It's not that as a reader of this stuff I want empiricism necessarily, only consistency, consecutive reasoning. It's as if we have at least two voices in the discipline—the voice of the researcher, the investigator, and the voice of the teacher in the classroom, the professor, the person in the world telling stories and expressing value—and we can't figure out how to relate these, how to move from one to the other. There's a waffling.

But White avoids this waffling by describing it. He fills the gap by admitting it—by explaining as clearly and honestly as he can the strengths and weaknesses of empirical study. There is this research, he keeps saying—and it does have value, we should keep doing it and reading about it, but finally we have to realize that "programs, students, teachers, and writing itself are all too complex for conventional educational research methods" (18). Or again: "It is clearly too early to ask research in composition programs to provide answers to the thorny problems in the field" (33). Or: we must face "the depressing inability of empirical research to provide us with convincing program evaluation" (199). Over and over White makes the point that in composition studies there are always these two poles of experience and theory, conviction and research, and that to be valid, to be useful, composition must constantly travel back and forth between them, hold them in tension. It's research *and* experience, data *and* desire, and all the fuzziness, the murkiness in between. With such careful qualifiers inserted between the descriptions

of research and the final personal recommendations, there is no inconsistency in White's analysis. Given the complex and problematic nature of composition, the recourse to "I" is one of his most responsible moves. It's White's concrete, human, committed voice, then, that finally gives the book its authority. It certainly makes it readable and interesting. The style is blessedly free of jargon, direct and straightforward, conveying the voice of a real person. But more than that, it reflects the way things really are in this business. The wholeness and complexity of the writing process is mirrored in the administering of a writing program, White is saying. It's all rhetoric not dialectic, involved always in contingency and desire. As he puts it in the eloquent final paragraph of the book:

In program evaluation, as in all other aspects of writing programs, we need to resist using or accepting simple and reductive definitions, procedures, tests, and inferences. It is surely a wise instinct that leads us to trust writing instruction more to poets than to scientists, or even to logicians. The resistant reality of learning to think, to write, to create, to revise and recreate, to understand does not yield its secrets readily. Our primary job, in program evaluation as in many other aspects of our work, is to help others see the complexity and importance of writing, to distinguish between the simple and the not so simple, to be willing to accept the evidence of many kinds of serious inquiry into the nature of creative thought. That, of course, is just one more way of defining the function of every teacher and scholar. (206)

This is the truth we already knew, but we needed a scholar like White to remind us, to say it again, and to say it this powerfully. Reading White we experience again that inevitable, wry recognition that we just have to muddle through. And there is also the old exhilaration, the old humanistic paradigm reasserting itself. We only wish for the empirical panacea, for scientific salvation, for a moment. Deep down we really wouldn't want a simple answer because that would falsify our experience and take away our freedom. Deep down we want to be poets and scholars, which is why we got into teaching to begin with.

In *The Road Less Travelled*, Scott Peck tells us that to be healthy and mature as people, we need to accept complexity. "It is in this whole process of meeting and solving problems that life has its meaning," Peck says, in his pop-psychological (but nonetheless wise) way. Ed White reminds WPAs that poetry and scholarship embrace complexity by their very nature, and that, in this sense at least, to grow into maturity, to be healthy, writing program administration must remain fundamentally poetic and scholarly.





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Cherryl Armstrong is an Assistant Professor of English at California State University at Northridge where she has co-directed the Composition Program and now co-directs the Teaching Assistant Program. She is an Associate Director of the South Coast Writing Project. Professor Armstrong formerly taught at Harvard University and at the University of California at Santa Barbara. She has published articles on composition in a number of journals, including *Rhetoric Review* and the *Journal of Basic Writing*, and she also publishes poetry.

Don Daiker is a Professor of English at Miami University and the secretary-treasurer of the Council of Writing Program Administrators. His essays on writing assessment appear in *Freshman English News*, *Journal of Teaching Writing*, and *Writing and Response: Theory, Practice, and Research* (NCTE). With Mary Fuller and Jack Wallace, he is coauthor of *Literature: Options for Reading and Writing* (2nd ed., Harper), and with Max Morenberg, he is coauthor of *The Writing Teacher as Researcher: Essays in the Theory and Practice of Class-Based Research* (Heinemann-Boynton/Cook).

Sheryl I. Fontaine is an Assistant Professor of Literature and the Director of the English Resources Center at Claremont-McKenna College. She is a Writing Associate of the Bard College Institute of Writing and Thinking. She has also taught at the State University of New York at Stony Brook and the University of California at San Diego. Professor Fontaine has written essays for *The English Record*, *ADE Bulletin*, *Rhetoric Review*, *Educational Research Quarterly*, and *The Social Construction of Written Communication* (Ablex, 1988). She is currently, with Pat Belanoff and Peter Elbow, editing a book of essays on freewriting to be published by Boynton/Cook.

Kathy Jane Garretson is the Director of Disabled Student Services and the Equal Employment Opportunity trainer for the Office of Affirmative Action at Washington State University. She also consults with high schools to help develop special education curricula which will prepare disabled students for postsecondary academic work.

Diana George is an Associate Professor of Humanities at Michigan Technological University where she directs the First-year English program. Her work in composition studies has appeared in *College Composition and Communication*, *English Journal*, *Writing Center Journal*, *College Teaching*, and most recently, *The Journal of Teaching Writing*.

Nedra Grogan is a doctoral student at Miami University where she is completing a one-year research fellowship on the assessment of student writing. Formerly Director of the Writing Center and Acting Director of Composition at the University of Tampa, she is currently a Chief Reader for the Scholastic Writing Awards program at Miami. She has co-authored essays on composition, appearing in *Selected Papers of the Southeastern Writing Centers Association Conference* and forthcoming in *Carolina English Teacher* and *Journal of Advanced Composition*.

Jeanette Harris is the Director of Composition and Associate Professor of English at Texas Tech University. She has coauthored two textbooks (*Contexts*, with Ann Moseley; *A Writer's Introduction to Word Processing*, with Christine Hult) and published articles in numerous journals. Her study of expressive discourse is being published by SMU press in their Studies in Composition series.

Christine Hult, Associate Professor of English at Utah State University, is the editor of *WPA: Writing Program Administration*. Her research interests include computerized library research and writing program assessment, reflected in recent publications in *Computers and Composition* and the *Journal of Advanced Composition*, as well as her textbooks, *A Writer's Introduction to Word Processing* (with Jeanette Harris) and *Researching and Writing Across The Curriculum*, 2nd edition.

M. Jimmie Killingsworth, an Associate Professor, is the Director of Professional Writing at Memphis State University. He is the author of *Whitman's Poetry of the Body: Sexuality, Politics, and the Text* (U of North Carolina, 1989) and has published widely in rhetoric, technical writing, and American Literature. He is now at work on a book about rhetoric and environmental politics.

Susan H. McLeod is an Associate Professor of English and the Director of Composition at Washington State University. Her publications include *Strengthening Programs for Writing Across the Curriculum* (Jossey-Bass, 1988) and articles on writing and writing theory in a variety of journals. She is a member of the Board of Consultants of the National Network of Writing Across the Curriculum Programs.

David E. Schwalm is currently the Director of Composition at Arizona State University and was formerly the Director of Composition at the University of Texas at El Paso. His research interests include rhetorical analysis of nonfiction texts, the rhetoric of biography, and degree of difficulty in writing assignments. He has published articles over the last few years in *College English*, *The Writing Instructor*, and *Biography*.

Announcements

Writing Program Evaluation

Why evaluate a college or university writing program? To identify and reaffirm existing strengths, to pinpoint problems and suggest solutions, to clarify the relationship of writing programs and their personnel to actual or prospective administrative units—among a host of reasons.

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The Council of Writing Program Administrators Consultant Evaluation service is supported in part by an Exxon grant and by modest fees—\$2000 plus travel expenses (some grant support is available). For further information, write Dr. Edward M. White, Department of English, California State University, San Bernardino, CA 92407 or call (714) 880-5845.

Electronic Bulletin Board

The Indiana Writing Project announces that it will provide a public electronic bulletin board for writing teachers. Teachers can access the board by calling (317) 285-8414 with their modems set to eight data bits, even parity, and one stop bit. (Almost any default modem setting will do.) The bulletin board system can accept calls at 300 bps, 1200 bps, or 2400 bps. It will automatically register first-time callers. Callers are asked to limit their time online to 30 minutes since only one phone line is currently available to support the board.

The IWP Bulletin Board has as its goal the free exchange of information among writing teachers. It is a place where teachers may exchange assignments and public domain software. It is also a place where teachers can engage in ongoing dialogues about professional issues. IWP hopes that this will become an important and efficient way for teachers to communicate with one another.

At present, IWP plans to provide a set of assignments for downloading by the end of its 1989 Summer Institute on July 14. Others are encouraged to upload assignments for sharing as soon as possible. Anyone with suggestions about how this board could serve teachers is encouraged to leave a message.

IWP intends to make the bulletin board available 20 hours per weekday and 24 hours per weekend day. Scheduled down times are from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm on week days.

JAC Award

The James L. Kinneavy Award for the most outstanding essay of 1989 published in the *Journal of Advanced Composition* was awarded to Reed Way Dasenbrock at the CCCC meeting in Seattle. This honor, which includes a cash award and a handsome plaque, was generously endowed by Professor Kinneavy, Blumberg Centennial Professor of English at the University of Texas at Austin. The award is given each year at the meeting of the Association of Teachers of Advanced Writing at the CCCC. Dasenbrock's article, "Becoming Aware of the Myth of Presence," is a systematic application of a key Derridean concern—the concept of presence/absence—to the teaching of writing at all levels, which carries theoretical as well as pragmatic, pedagogical implications. The award of honorable mention, which also carries a handsome plaque, went to William Covino for his essay, "Defining Advanced Composition: Contributions from the History of Rhetoric." This essay articulates the classical emphasis on "the open intellectual play of multiple perspectives" as characteristic of successful advanced writing, a new approach to the contemporary teaching of advanced composition.

Tenth Anniversary Issue of *The Writing Center Journal*

The editors of *The Writing Center Journal* are circulating a call for a special issue to be published Fall/Winter, 1990. We are interested in seeing manuscripts that reflect or look back on writing center beginnings. Topics might include the professionalization/politicization of writing centers, the writing center movement in the context of other movements (e.g., National Writing Project), the growth of technology in writing centers, changing perceptions of peer tutoring, research, writing centers in two-year colleges or public schools, the changing mission of writing centers, the effect of writing center pedagogy on classroom pedagogy, and scholarship trends.

Essays that look forward and address the future of writing centers are welcome; we will also consider interviews, reminiscences, poems, and photographs.

Manuscripts should be submitted by March 30, 1990 to Jeanette Harris, Editor, Department of English, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX 79409; information about subscriptions can be obtained from Joyce Kinkead, Editor, Department of English, Utah State University, Logan, UT 84322-3200.



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