Review of *Writing Across the Curriculum: A Guide to Developing Programs*, Eds. McLeod and Soven

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In her preface to this collection of essays, Elaine Maimon describes herself as "wishing that somehow this book had existed in 1974 when many of us were first embarking on the collegial enterprise now known as writing across the curriculum" (ix). This book is, as her wish suggests, an indispensable tool for new WAC directors/creators; however, the collection delivers more than its title promises, providing not only a "guide to developing programs" but also a wealth of information and some important reminders for seasoned WAC directors.

Susan McLeod and Margot Soven have done more here than merely edit and package a series of fine pieces by experienced WAC administrators. They have created a collection that includes a coherent philosophy of WAC, one based on respect for the expertise of faculty in disciplines other than English. Throughout the collection, writers speak across their essay boundaries, pointing out how other works in the collection connect with or support the assumptions and practices of their own programs. Barbara Walvoord's excellent essay, "Getting Started" (arguably the most important piece in the collection, certainly the most often cited by the editors and other writers), describes a conversation-based philosophy of WAC with which many other writers in the collection clearly agree. Alerting her readers to the problems of imagining that WAC provides "'training' for 'untrained' faculty" or that WAC seeks to convert "heathen [faculty] to the Right Way" (15), Walvoord introduces and describes in detail methods for holding an ongoing dialogue with faculty across campus about "language use in the classroom" (30).

Walvoord's interest in and insistence on developing WAC through dialogue is echoed by most of the writers in this collection. One essay especially noteworthy in this regard is Peshe C. Kuriloff's fine piece, "The Writing Consultant: Collaboration and Team Teaching." This essay revolves around a convincing examination of the principles that made interactions between a WAC director and a professor of Engineering successful. Kuriloff includes a set of questions to help WAC administrators engage in productive conversations with faculty in other disciplines, questions such as "What kind of learning environment should we foster?" and "How is new knowledge created [in this discipline]?"

In addition to examining conversation as a foundation for WAC, this collection brims over with practical help on a wide range of problems confronting any WAC administrator. Joyce Neff Magnotto and Barbara Stout's "Faculty Workshops" provides sample agendas for one-day and five-day workshops. The writers address critical issues, such as funding, scheduling and publicity, matters that many new WAC directors find completely foreign. Walvoord's essay, mentioned above, supplements this information with an initial sequence (complete with chart) of appropriate meetings and planning activities for beginning a WAC program, as well as suggestions for locating resources in the form of grants and collaboration with other schools. Even more suggestions for "Starting a WAC Program" appear in Karen Wiley Sandler's piece, subtitled "Strategies for Administrators." Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs at Juniata College in Huntington, Pennsylvania, Sandler adds an unusual perspective to this WAC collection, permitting the reader to view an initial WAC workshop and the development of a WAC program from a college administrator's point of view. Her comprehensive list of advice to other pro-WAC administrators will be helpful to WAC directors who want to sensitize their campus administration to WAC's dual needs for support and autonomy.

Much of *Writing Across the Curriculum: A Guide to Developing Programs* concerns itself with presenting a variety of program models. This makes the collection a good companion piece to Toby Fulwiler and Art Young's *Programs That Work: Models and Methods of Writing Across the Curriculum* (Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Boynton/Cook Heinemann, 1990). While the latter collection permits WAC directors to acquaint themselves with a range of possible WAC models, McLeod and Soven's *Guide* stresses the genesis of several models and underscores the need for organic WAC programs that develop in interaction with particular campus environments. Although I would hesitate to call the *Guide* more basic than *Programs That Work*, I would say that the writers of the *Guide* assume a readership of new WAC directors, thus creating an intensive focus on the *why* and *how* of programs rather than on the *what*.

For example, Christopher Thaiss's look at "WAC and General Education Courses" begins with an investigation of the student populations in GE courses. Thaiss shows how effective writing assignments in such courses must be created with students' assumptions and needs in mind. Tori Haring-Smith's discussion of the Brown University "Writing Fellows" program that employs students as WAC consultants begins with a narrative of her situation at Brown. Her essay demonstrates how the use of students as writing consultants helped to alter the widespread belief

among faculty at Brown that writing should be taught only by English Teachers. Thaiss and Haring-Smith, like other writers in the *Guide*, provide lists of objectives and questions, information about how they monitor and coordinate their programs, and advice about problems that are sure to arise (such as the overuse of one kind of writing assignment in all GE courses or the inevitable difficulties of student burnout in an intensive, cross-disciplinary tutoring program).

Other essays in the collection discuss the connection between WAC and Freshman English (Linda Peterson), provide an extensive set of options for creating "Writing Components, Writing Adjuncts, Writing Links" (Joan Graham), and consider ways of making discipline-based, writing-intensive courses "tools for change" (Christine Farris and Raymond Smith). Each piece stresses the need for faculty dialogues about and faculty ownership of WAC courses.

Muriel Harris's "The Writing Center and Tutoring in WAC Programs" deserves special mention for a thorough discussion not only of the Writing Center-WAC connection but also for helpful advice on beginning a Writing Center. Harris's essay assumes that the reader may be starting from ground zero at his or her campus, with no writing support programs in place. Her humane, helpful piece reminds us that WAC cannot afford to miss the student's need for the "collaborative efforts of readers and coaches" in its quest for better writing pedagogy across the curriculum.

As editors, McLeod and Soven have contributed this collection's introductory and concluding chapters, respectively. McLeod's introduction gives an overview of the book and highlights its major premise: "A WAC program needs strong administrative support, but it also has to be a bottom-up phenomenon" that relies on only a few faculty at the outset (6). Soven's conclusion advises new WAC administrators of some difficulties inherent in maintaining a program, including the challenge of "sustain[ing] faculty enthusiasm" (193) and the need to come to terms with all we still don't know about how writing abilities develop. She ends by returning to Walvoord's assertion that "WAC helps people grow. We could have WAC workshops for faculty on every campus every year until the end of the world"(196).

Writing Across the Curriculum: A Guide to Developing Programs includes an appendix of recommended reading for new WAC administrators. This, coupled with the bibliographies accompanying each essay, provides the reader with a comprehensive list of important WAC reading. For those who have administered WAC programs for some time, this collection includes several pieces to refresh old news and more familiar pieces to remind us that the challenges WAC programs face often create the best possibilities for program innovation and educational reform.