

*I*t is clear within departments of English that research and teaching are generally regarded as intellectual, professional activities worthy of tenure and promotion. But administration—including leadership of first-year writing courses, WAC programs, writing centers, and the many other manifestations of writing administration—has for the most part been treated as a management activity that does not produce new knowledge and that neither requires nor demonstrates scholarly expertise and disciplinary knowledge. While there are certainly arguments to be made for academic administration, in general, as intellectual work, that is not our aim here. Instead, our concern in this document is to present a framework by which writing administration can be seen as scholarly work and therefore subject to the same kinds of evaluation as other forms of disciplinary production, such as books, articles, and reviews. More significantly, by refiguring writing administration as scholarly and intellectual work, we argue that it is worthy of tenure and promotion when it advances and enacts disciplinary knowledge within the field of rhetoric and composition.<sup>1</sup>

## *Evaluating the Intellectual Work of Writing Administration*

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Council of Writing  
Program Administrators

### **1. Introduction: Three Cases**

#### ***A Literary Scholar: Rewarding the Production of Knowledge***

In her fourth year as a tenure-track assistant professor at a land-grant university, Mary C. came to her current position after teaching for two years at a private university where she had established a good reputation for both her scholarship and her teaching. Her present department places considerable emphasis on teaching, at least for a research university, and her col-

leagues have taken special note of her pedagogical skills in their annual evaluations, recognizing that teaching quality will play some role for both the dean and the provost in decisions on tenure and promotion. Nonetheless, Mary has wisely concentrated on publishing refereed articles, poems in magazines with good literary reputations, and a book with a major university press. After all, the format for promotion and tenure at her university identifies these as "categories of effort" that weigh heavily in the awarding of tenure and in promotion to higher rank. The guidelines also emphasize the importance of quality in scholarly efforts as measured not just by the judgment of her departmental colleagues but also by outside evaluators who provide an estimate of the currency and value of her scholarship as well as the prestige and visibility of the outlets in which her work appears.

By describing Mary's achievements in this familiar manner, we may be able readily to understand why she is likely to be promoted—and why her chances for advancement differ markedly from other instructors within the broad field of English literature and composition, particularly those who work as writing administrators. To do this, we need to view her work, despite its undeniably humanistic content, as the production of specific commodities—albeit scholarly commodities—with a clear exchange value, perhaps not on the general market but certainly in academic institutions. While Mary's colleagues and others who read her work can appreciate it for its uses—for the personal value of her insights into literary works or as poetry worth sharing with friends and students—the institution assigns it positive importance because the work assumes recognizable and conventional forms to which value can be readily assigned, and the valuations are likely to be recognized and accepted by most colleagues and academic departments. Because Mary's work takes conventional forms and has a recognized exchange value, her institution uses it as a basis for justifying its decision to award her with tenure and promotion—a justification it owes to the university community, to the board of regents, and to the academic community in general.

#### ***A Composition Teacher/Scholar:***

##### ***Rewarding Pedagogy and Pedagogical Knowledge***

Twenty years ago Doug R. might have been an uncertain candidate

for tenure and promotion. An assistant professor at a regional state university with a large composition program, Doug has published a number of articles in highly regarded journals in rhetoric and composition studies, though his publication record is by no means extensive. Doug's institution, however, has a well-developed system for student and departmental teaching evaluations, and Doug scores especially high on his classroom performance in both student questionnaires and on the frequent faculty observations filed by a variety of senior colleagues within the department, including the chairperson and the writing program director. Moreover, both by contract and by informal agreement, both the department and the administration at Doug's institution are required to take into account demonstrated excellence in teaching when evaluating faculty for tenure and promotion. It helps as well that Doug's specialty is composition, an academic specialty that is viewed by the administration as central to the university's undergraduate mission.

Doug's academic achievements, especially as a classroom teacher, have made it likely that he will be tenured and promoted. His pedagogical efforts take forms recognized by his colleagues and his institution and they are assigned value by accepted procedures. In combination with his published scholarship (and typical departmental committee service), Doug's teaching—which has been evaluated and quantified and made visible—becomes a strong factor in his promotion. Doug is also an innovative teacher who has shared his contributions to curricular design and pedagogy through workshops at his own institution and through presentations at national conferences. Besides having value for his colleagues and for students, these efforts appear on his vita: they constitute an important part of his reputation as a professional.

#### ***A Writing Administrator: A Problematic Case***

Cheryl W. has been working hard as an assistant professor and writing director at a medium-sized university, a position for which she was hired after taking a PhD in rhetoric and composition and teaching for two years (ABD) at a college with a nationally known WAC program. Cheryl has a teaching load of only One/Two, but her responsibilities are overwhelming: supervision and curriculum design for a large first-year composition program, TA training, design and administration of an emerging WAC program

(with faculty workshops and publicity), many hours in the office dealing with student issues and writing reports, and an occasional graduate course in composition theory. In addition, Cheryl has guided development of five upper-level writing courses for both English majors and students in other fields, in the process greatly expanding the writing program. Cheryl's department and her institution support the growth of her program, perhaps because she has carried it out both diplomatically and professionally.

Unfortunately, Cheryl has published only a handful of refereed articles, far below the expected level for candidates for tenure and promotion at her institution. Moreover, because she has a relatively light teaching load, she has not been able to develop as thorough and far-reaching a reputation as a teacher as have most of her colleagues, and she has to face the expectation, held by her university faculty generally, that anyone with such a light teaching load should have published much more. This expectation is not the result of any hostility towards rhetoric and composition as a field; indeed, two of her colleagues, one of whom works in rhetoric and technical communication and the other of whom specializes in composition research and teacher training, have published a good deal and are considered prime candidates for tenure and promotion. Cheryl and her supporters suspect, in fact, that the productivity of these other two writing specialists may become an argument for denying her tenure and hiring someone who will be productive in ways that the department and the institution can readily recognize and value.

While many members of Cheryl's department agree that she has been working hard, they are not sure that she has been doing "real work." Others, who think her efforts have been valuable to the department, have difficulty specifying her accomplishments other than stating that "she has done an excellent job running the writing program." The problem is particularly clear to one of Cheryl's colleagues, the former director of the writing program, who recognizes the specific tasks involved in activities like supervising teaching assistants and who also recognizes that Cheryl has accomplished these tasks with energy, vision, and expertise. This colleague sums up the problem facing Cheryl and her supporters this way: "First you have to be able to specify exactly what it is that you do as a WPA; then you have to convince people

that your work is intellectual work, grounded in disciplinary knowledge, demanding expertise, and producing knowledge or other valued ends, not simply busy work or administrivia that anyone with a reasonable intelligence could do; and finally you have to demonstrate that your work has been both professional and creative—worthy of recognition and reward." Unless Cheryl can do these things, her efforts will not have value within her own institution, nor will they have exchange value when she applies for another position, unless, of course, that institution has already developed a clear definition of the intellectual work of a writing administrator and can evaluate Cheryl's work within these terms. Right now, however, Cheryl will have to list her administrative categories in the small box labeled "Service" on her institution's tenure/promotion form, a category distinguished by its lack of clear definition in contrast to the detailed subcategories under "Research" (books, articles, chapters, reviews, presentations, and grants) and "Teaching" (student evaluations, supervisory reports, curriculum development, presentations and publications). Unless there is a way to demonstrate the intellectual value of her work, Cheryl is unlikely to be rewarded for her administrative work and will be denied tenure and promotion.

## ***2. The Production of Knowledge and the Problem of Assigning Value to Academic Work***

Terms like "exchange value" and "use value" and the concepts they embody help lay bare the system of academic judgments and rewards with which we are all familiar, a system that lies behind the three cases described in the previous section. Academic institutions grant tenure and promotion (and hire) because they share the same understandings and values. Although departments of English, and institutions of higher education generally, may differ substantially as to the particularities of what they value—teaching, book publication, scholarly articles, local publishing, community outreach, etc.—there is considerable congruence among them concerning the ways they quantify academic work.

We use the term "quantify" advisedly. Tenure and promotion are granted on the basis of criteria that might be said to be objective. They are too familiar to rehearse here, but they might be generally described with the

phrase "professional accomplishment" as measured and indicated by books, articles, conference presentations, teaching evaluations, etc. These accomplishments are concrete and can be evaluated; they can be counted, weighed, analyzed, and held forward for public review. In most departments of English, for example, to have a book accepted by Oxford, Yale, or Harvard University Press is to be assured of tenure and promotion. In colleges that place a primary value on undergraduate instruction, a faculty member whose teaching evaluations place her in the top three percent is similarly likely to be tenured and promoted. Perhaps more important than their quantifiable nature, these accomplishments are largely familiar to faculty and administrators; they are exactly the kinds of accomplishments that have been considered by universities for years in cases of tenure and promotion. Familiarity breeds ease of use; university machinery works most smoothly and efficiently when there is little or no quarrel about the means by which decisions are made. Indeed, in the case of scholarship, many of us might agree that the all-too-prevalent tendency to prefer quantity over quality is a clear sign of intellectual work turned into a quantifiable commodity. What this tells us, however, is that academic systems of evaluation and reward have for a long time assigned clear exchange values to scholarship and are now on the way to doing so with teaching.

Activities other than research and teaching, however, have little exchange value, no matter how highly they might be valued on an individual basis by fellow faculty, by administrators, or society. Only when such activities lead to a move outside faculty ranks, to a deanship, perhaps, do they take on exchange value. Otherwise, they generally appear under the ill-defined and seldom-rewarded category of "service" in promotion and tenure evaluations, a category to which the work of writing administrators is too often relegated.

In academe, work that long has been categorized as "service" occupies a wide spectrum and has proven extremely difficult to describe and evaluate. The 1996 report of the MLA Commission on Professional Service "Making Faculty Work Visible: Reinterpreting Professional Service, Teaching, and Research in the Fields of Language and Literature" states the problem clearly:

*Service has functioned in the past as a kind of grab-bag for all professional work that was not clearly classroom teaching, research, or scholarship. As a result, recent efforts to define it more precisely (as "professional service") have tended to select out one subset of these activities and fail to account for all the clearly professional work previously lumped together under this rubric. . . . Yet it is hard to come up with a principled definition based on common features or family resemblances among all these activities and to avoid confusions with the concept of citizenship. (184)*

We do not expect to resolve the problem completely in this document. The MLA report provides useful information with its distinctions between applied work and institutional service (see 184-188). It also challenges the traditional view of service as a separate category of faculty work by identifying service, teaching, and scholarship as sites of both "intellectual work" and "professional citizenship" (162-63, 173)—an approach which means that "research is no longer the exclusive site of intellectual work" (177) and that service "can also entail substantive intellectual labor" (178).

Another helpful perspective is found in Ernest Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*. Boyer argues that scholarship is not one category but is rather distributed over four somewhat distinguishable categories: Discovery, Integration, Application, and Teaching. The one that concerns us here is Application. Boyer makes clear that "colleges and universities have recently rejected service as serious scholarship, partly because its meaning is so vague and often disconnected from serious intellectual work" (22). More importantly, Boyer argues that:

*a sharp distinction must be drawn between citizenship activities and projects that relate to scholarship itself. To be sure, there are meritorious social and civic functions to be performed, and faculty should be appropriately recognized for such work. But all too frequently, service means not doing scholarship but doing good. To be considered scholarship, service activities must be tied directly to one's special field of knowledge and relate to, and flow directly out of, this professional activity. Such service is serious, demanding work, requir-*

*ing the rigor—and the accountability—traditionally associated with research activities. (22)*

Let us emphasize the main point here: "To be considered scholarship, service activities must be tied directly to one's special field of knowledge and relate to, and flow directly out of, this professional activity. Such service is serious, demanding work, requiring the rigor—and the accountability—traditionally associated with research activities." What Boyer is arguing is not that all service should count; rather, service can be considered as part of scholarship if it derives from and is reinforced by scholarly knowledge and disciplinary understanding. As Boyer makes clear, in work of this sort, "theory and practice vitally interact, and one renews the other" (23).

Clearly there are many service activities that support and enhance departmental and university structures. Service on departmental and college-level committees is one of the clearest examples. Serving as the director or coordinator of an academic program may be another. Such service is considered a form of scholarship, however, only if it flows from and contributes to the scholarship of the field. In our terms, such work is intellectual: it requires specific expertise, training, and an understanding of disciplinary knowledge.

An example may be in order. Let us presume that the director of a first-year writing program is designing an in-house placement procedure so that students new to the college can be placed into the appropriate course in the first-year composition sequence. She will need to decide whether to use direct or indirect measures of writing ability; will need to assess the implications that the placement procedure will have on high school curriculum; will want to consult research on such things as the nature of writing prompts, whether an objective test and a writing test should be used together, and the optimal amount of time for the exam. Thus what some see as a simple decision (place students according to an ACT score) is, in reality, complex intellectual work involving disciplinary knowledge, empirical research, and histories of practice.

An additional dimension of this kind of intellectual work is that it neither derives from nor produces simplistic products or services. Rather, it

draws upon historical and contemporary knowledge, and it contributes to the formation of new knowledge and improved decision making. These kinds of practices lead to new knowledge and innovative educational programs and contribute to thoughtful and invigorated teaching.

### **3. Evaluating The Work Of Writing Administration**

What this document is arguing is that a definition of writing administration as intellectual work in colleges and universities must take into account the paradigm established by research and scholarship. At its highest level, this means the production of new knowledge (what *Scholarship Reconsidered* calls the "scholarship of discovery"). But the contemporary scholarly paradigm embraces a much broader spectrum of intellectual work. For instance, *The Disciplines Speak*, the report of a national working group of representatives from sixteen different professional associations (including CCCC and MLA), indicates that scholarly activity can be demonstrated in ways as diverse as "publishing the results of one's scholarly research, developing a new course, writing an innovative textbook, implementing an outreach program for the community . . . or assisting in a K-12 curriculum project" (Diamond and Adam 13). The MLA's "Making Faculty Work Visible" offers this list of some of the "projects and enterprises of knowledge and learning" in English Studies:

- *creating new questions, problems, information, interpretations, designs, products, frameworks of understanding, etc., through inquiry (e.g., empirical, textual, historical, theoretical, technological, artistic, practical);*
- *clarifying, critically examining, weighing, and revising the knowledge claims, beliefs, or understanding of others and oneself;*
- *connecting knowledge to other knowledge;*
- *preserving . . . and reinterpreting past knowledge;*
- *applying aesthetic, political, and ethical values to make judgments about knowledge and its uses;*
- *arguing knowledge claims in order to invite criticism and revision;*
- *making specialized knowledge broadly accessible and usable, e.g., to young learners, to nonspecialists in other disciplines, to the public;*

- *helping new generations to become active knowers themselves, preparing them for lifelong learning and discovery;*
- *applying knowledge to practical problems in significant or innovative ways;*
- *creating insight and communicating forms of experience through artistic works or performance. (MLA 175-76)*

Within this contemporary scholarly paradigm, writing administration may be considered intellectual work when it meets two tests. First, it needs to advance knowledge—its production, clarification, connection, reinterpretation, or application. Second, it results in products or activities that can be evaluated by others—for instance, against this list of qualities which, according to *The Disciplines Speak*, “seem to characterize that work that most disciplines would consider ‘scholarly’ or ‘professional’”:

- *the activity requires a high level of discipline-related expertise.*
- *the activity . . . is innovative.*
- *the activity can be replicated or elaborated.*
- *the work and its results can be documented.*
- *the work and its results can be peer-reviewed.*
- *the activity has significance or impact. (Diamond and Adam 14)*

In order to be regarded as intellectual work, therefore, writing administration must be viewed as a form of inquiry which advances knowledge and which has formalized outcomes that are subject to peer review and disciplinary evaluation. Just as the articles, stories, poems, books, committee work, classroom performance, and other evidence of tenure and promotion can be critiqued and evaluated by internal and external reviewers, so can the accomplishments, products, innovations, and contributions of writing administrators. Indeed, such review must be central to the evaluation of writing administration as scholarly and intellectual work.

Defining and evaluating the work of writing administrators is a process that needs to be made explicit so that those who do this work—and they are often beginning faculty who are over-worked, over-stressed, and untenured—stand a real chance of succeeding professionally within departmental and institutional contexts. On a national level, this process not only can provide guidelines to help institutions and faculty understand and prop-

erly evaluate the work of writing administrators, but also produce some degree of empirical data that can create an exchange value for administrative accomplishments parallel to that already in place for research and teaching.

The remainder of this document will suggest guidelines which we hope will prove useful to individuals, committees, and departments working to develop materials and policies for evaluating writing administrators (“WPAs,” as they are often called). First, Section 4 will propose five descriptive categories within which the intellectual work of a WPA can be best considered. Then, in Section 5, we will suggest several evaluative criteria by which merit pay increases as well as tenure and promotion decisions can be made fairly and thoughtfully in terms of the quality and the quantity of intellectual work achieved by a writing administrator. Finally, Section 6 will provide a framework that can be used to organize the accomplishments—and to help in the evaluation—of individuals devoted to writing administration.

#### **4. Five Categories Of Intellectual Work**

Although writing administration, like the work of any other administrative figure on campus, is subject to a variety of different interpretations, we propose that much of it can be understood as falling within one or more of these categories: Program Creation, Curricular Design, Faculty Development, Program Assessment, and Program-Related Textual Production.

##### **Program Creation**

Whatever the specific focus of administration (first-year course, WAC program, writing center, etc.), one of the primary scholarly accomplishments of writing administration is the creation of a program. By creation, we mean those specific activities that reconceive the philosophy, goals, purposes, and institutional definition of the specific writing program. Program creation is not something that every writing administrator does or should do; if a WPA inherits a well-designed program that is generally viewed positively by students, faculty, and campus administrators, then it is likely that the program will be maintained. Even in such cases, however, a person engaged in the intellectual work of writing administration can add, modify, or otherwise develop a significant new emphasis or supplementary support

system. For example, a writing administrator might create a Writing Center to support and enhance undergraduate instruction or he might revise the emphasis of second-semester composition by altering the programmatic goals from a traditional research paper to shorter essays emphasizing academic discourse or cultural studies.

Our point here is that program creation is a strong indication of intellectual work, since successful programs are grounded in significant disciplinary knowledge, a national perspective that takes into account the successes and failures of other composition programs, and a combined practical and theoretical understanding of learning theory, the composing process, the philosophy of composition, rhetorical theory, etc. An obvious corollary is that writing programs that fail, other than when attacked on the basis of budget and ideology, often do so because they lack this scholarly foundation.

### ***Curricular Design***

Although closely related to program creation, curricular design is a somewhat differentiated use of scholarly knowledge that is still strongly representative of intellectual work. Indeed, although we separate the categories for the sake of elaboration, they greatly overlap. Curricular design is the overall articulation of the administrative unit: the establishment of a programmatic architecture that structures and maintains the various components of the composition program being evaluated. Curricular design does not inevitably depend on or illustrate scholarly knowledge; in combination with program creation, however, it is strongly indicative of intellectual work.

Once a WPA has engaged in program creation, for example by developing an innovative curricular emphasis for English 101, the next step is to integrate that new emphasis within the curriculum. That is likely to mean reconfiguring course requirements, altering curricular emphases, choosing new textbooks that more fully endorse the new vision, etc. Another example can be drawn from Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC), a program that is often independent of any specific department but whose director must often be promoted and tenured within English. Program design for a WAC director might include the articulation of requirements and standards by which the program includes some courses and excludes others, the development of criteria for evaluating the success of specific courses, the

creation of well-articulated expectations so that faculty across the disciplines include writing in their courses with some degree of commonality. Curricular design is not a purely technical matter; it requires an understanding of the conceptual, a grounding in composition history, theory, and pedagogy. This is inevitably the case since its chief goal is to lead the writing program toward a coherent and explicit philosophy.

### ***Faculty Development***

Whether working with faculty, teaching assistants, lecturers, adjunct faculty, or undergraduate peer tutors, it is clear that no writing program can succeed unless its staff is well trained and generally in accord with the overall programmatic goals and methodologies. Thus one of a writing administrator's chief responsibilities is to maintain a strong staff development program. The chief responsibilities, here, are to: develop and implement training programs for new and experienced staff; communicate current pedagogical approaches and current research in rhetoric and composition; provide logistical, intellectual, and financial support for staff activities in course design, pedagogical development, and research; maintain an atmosphere of openness and support for the development and sharing of effective teaching ideas and curricular emphases; maintain open lines of communication among administrators, support staff, and faculty; etc.

Although it is often overlooked, faculty and staff development depends primarily on one factor: the degree to which those being administered value and respect the writing administrator. Staff development cannot be accomplished by fiat. Instructors cannot simply be ordered and coerced, no matter how subordinate their position within the university. Thus faculty development, when it truly accomplishes its purpose of improving teaching and maintaining the highest classroom standards, is one of the most salient examples of intellectual work carried out within an administrative sphere. To be an effective administrative leader, a WPA must be able to incorporate current research and theory into the training and must demonstrate that knowledge through both word and deed.

### ***Program Assessment and Evaluation***

Accountability is one of the over-riding concepts in higher education generally, and in writing administration specifically. No single method or

paradigm exists that is appropriate for all composition programs; on the contrary, each writing administrator must develop site-specific measures for the assessment and evaluation of the goals, pedagogy, and overall effectiveness of the composition program. In a composition program, that assessment may take the form of portfolios; in that case, the scholarly expertise of the WPA takes the form of designing the portfolios, creating a rigorous and meaningful assessment procedure by which the portfolios can be evaluated, etc. In a WAC program, the writing administrator would likely need to develop assessment measures in order to demonstrate that writing-enhanced classes are indeed consolidating the knowledge of majors across campus and producing undergraduate students that have achieved a genuine measure of compositional ability.

In order to achieve meaningful assessment (by which we mean overall determination of programmatic effectiveness) and meaningful evaluation (that is, specific determination of students and instructors), writing administrators must bring to bear scholarly knowledge concerning holistic scoring, primary trait scoring, descriptive analysis, scoring rubrics, and other information that spans various disciplines. This knowledge and its application are essential if the program is to demonstrate its value and be assured of continuing funding.

#### ***Program-Related Textual Production***

By this category, we mean the production of written materials in addition to conference papers, articles in refereed journals, scholarly books, textbooks, and similar products that would be evaluated the same whether produced by a WPA or any other faculty member. (Textbooks are a special case. Clearly, not every textbook offers evidence of intellectual work; a grammar workbook that asks students to fill in the blanks or a reading anthology that is highly derivative and lacking in substantive pedagogical apparatus may not meet national and departmental definitions of intellectual work. Many textbooks, however, represent significant advances in instruction, both locally and nationally, and are, therefore, important ways for compositionists to demonstrate their scholarly expertise.)

Besides such products, numerous other texts must be considered as part of the writing administrator's resume of scholarly production. These

include such things as innovative course syllabi which articulate the WPA's curricular design; local, state, and national funding proposals for the enhancement of instruction; statements of teaching philosophy for the composition curriculum; original materials for instructional workshops; evaluations of teaching that explicitly articulate and promote overall programmatic goals; and resource materials for the training of staff as well as for the use of students in classrooms, writing centers, and other programs. Clearly boundaries must be set; not every memo, descriptive comment, or teaching evaluation embodies the concept of intellectual work. But any responsible system of evaluation needs to acknowledge that individuals engaged in the intellectual work of administration concretize their knowledge—and build a reviewable record—through the authorship of a body of textual materials related to program creation, curricular design, faculty development, and program assessment.

#### ***5. Evaluative Criteria***

Writing administrators provide leadership for many different kinds of programs—such as first-year courses, WAC, writing centers, and law programs—and they work in a wide variety of institutional settings—among them, two-year colleges, private four-year colleges, and large universities with an array of doctoral offerings. So it is not possible to establish a fixed set of criteria by which to evaluate writing administrators. It is possible, however, to offer general guidelines and suggestions which WPAs, personnel committees, department chairs, and others can use as they prepare materials and develop personnel policies that fit specific institutional contexts.

##### ***Guideline One***

The first guideline is based on the previous section, which describes five broad areas in which the intellectual work of writing administration occurs. We urge that materials and policies for the evaluation of writing administrators focus on the following areas:

- Program Creation
- Curricular Design
- Faculty Development
- Program Assessment and Evaluation

- Program-Related Textual Production.

#### **Guideline Two**

The second guideline attempts to clarify what sort of activities and products within the five categories should be considered "intellectual work." We suggest that a particular product or activity of a writing administrator is intellectual work when it meets one or more of these four criteria:

- It generates, clarifies, connects, reinterprets, or applies knowledge based on research, theory, and sound pedagogical practice;
- It requires disciplinary knowledge available only to an expert trained in or conversant with a particular field;
- It requires highly developed analytical or problem solving skills derived from specific expertise, training, or research derived from scholarly knowledge;
- It results in products or activities that can be evaluated by peers (e.g., publication, internal and outside evaluation, participant responses) as the contribution of the individual's insight, research, and disciplinary knowledge.

#### **Guideline Three**

The third guideline suggests more specific criteria that can be used to evaluate the quality of a product or activity reflecting a writing administrator's intellectual work:

- Innovation: The writing administrator creates one or more new programs, curricular emphases, assessment measures, etc.
- Improvement/Refinement: The writing administrator makes changes and alterations that distinctly and concretely lead to better teaching, sounder classroom practices, etc.
- Dissemination: The writing administrator, through workshops, colloquia, staff meetings, and other forums, is able to communicate curricular goals, methodologies, and overall programmatic philosophy in such a way as to lead to positive and productive results for students, instructors, and school.
- Empirical Results: The writing administrator is able to present concrete evidence of accomplishments; evidence may take the form of pre- and post-evaluative measures, written testimonials from

students and staff, teaching evaluations, etc.

This list, of course, is far from comprehensive. Indeed, as "Making Faculty Work Visible" puts it, "[i]ntellectual work in a postsecondary setting may excel in various ways," among them, "skill, care, rigor, and intellectual honesty; a heuristic passion for knowledge; originality; relevance and aptness; coherence, consistency, and development within a body of work; diversity and versatility of contribution; thorough knowledge and constructive use of important work by others; the habit of self-critical examination and openness to criticism and revision; sustained productivity over time; high impact and value to a local academic community like the department; relevance and significance to societal issues and problems; effective communication and dissemination" (MLA 177).

#### **Guideline Four**

The fourth guideline emphasizes the centrality of peer evaluation to describing and judging the intellectual work of writing administration. The Council of Writing Program Administrators encourages the use of peer review in evaluating the intellectual work of writing administrators. This will likely require the writing administrator to create a portfolio that reflects her or his scholarly and intellectual accomplishments as an administrator; this portfolio would be reviewed by outside evaluators selected by the department in consultation with the person being evaluated.

### **6. Implementation**

The Council of Writing Program Administrators is convinced that WPAs can be evaluated on the basis of their administrative work and that the four guidelines sketched above can help in the process by providing clear categories to organize the work of the writing administrator and by providing meaningful criteria by which to review that work.

Implicit in the guidelines of Section 5 is a framework that can be used to organize accomplishments—and to help in the evaluation—of faculty who are involved in writing administration:

#### **A. The Work of Writing Administration**

Description of activities and products organized by the five categories in Guideline One. (As the final paragraphs of Section 4 indicate, evaluation

could include a wide range of program-related written materials in addition to conference papers, articles in refereed journals, scholarly books, textbooks, and similar products that would be evaluated the same whether produced by a WPA or any other faculty member.)

#### **B. Evidence of Intellectual Work**

Representative activities and products with evidence relating to Guideline Two.

#### **C. Quality of Intellectual Work**

Representative activities and products with evidence relating to Guideline Three.

#### **D. Peer Review**

Reports from scholars and writing administrators qualified to evaluate the materials against broad professional standards.

This general framework may serve as an heuristic device for writing administrators preparing personnel materials and as an organizational structure for their portfolios, and it might work to guide reviews of portfolios by the institution. Given the wide range of duties possible for a given writing administrator—and the wide range of institutions within which WPAs work—that framework can also serve as a starting point for revision and refinement by writing administrators, personnel committees, department chairs, and others working so that the evaluation of writing administrators fits distinctive local conditions. If you are engaged in such work, the Council of Writing Program Administrators hopes you find this document a useful source of ideas about the intellectual work of writing administration and how this work can be evaluated.

#### **Notes**

1. "Evaluating the Intellectual Work of Writing Administration" evolved over several years since the WPA Executive Committee began developing an "intellectual work document" on the scholarly and professional activities of faculty involved in writing administration. Robert Schwegler, Gail Stygall, Judy Pearce, and Charles Schuster—consulting widely with Executive Committee members and others—developed approaches which Charles

Schuster drafted into the version published in the Fall 1996 issue of Writing Program Administration as a way to solicit additional responses. Following Executive Committee discussion of that draft at its July 1997 meeting, Richard Gebhardt coordinated a revision effort and drafted the version discussed, modified, and approved by the Executive Committee during its meetings in 1998. The Council of Writing Program Administrators recommends this document as a source of ideas about the intellectual work of writing administration and about how this work can be evaluated responsibly and professionally.

#### **Works Cited**

There are, of course, many other resources that you can turn to as you develop responsible means to evaluate writing program administrators. Here is a brief list of reports, articles, and books (the first three of which were quoted in this document):

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#### **Recommended for Further Reading**

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