

Writing Program Administration

*Journal of the
Council of Writing Program Administrators*

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WPA: Writing Program Administration publishes articles and essays concerning the organization, administration, practices, and aims of college and university writing programs. Possible topics include the education and support of writing teachers; the intellectual and administrative work of WPAs; the situation of writing programs within both academic institutions and broader contexts; the programmatic implications of current theories, technologies, and research; relationships between WPAs and other administrators and between writing and other academic programs; placement; assessment; and the professional status of WPAs.

The previous list is meant to be suggestive, not exhaustive, but contributions must be appropriate to the interests and concerns of those who administer writing programs. The editors welcome empirical research (quantitative as well as qualitative), historical research, and theoretical, essayistic, or reflective pieces.

The length of submissions should be approximately 2000 to 5000 words, although the journal occasionally will publish shorter or longer pieces when the subject matter warrants. Articles should be suitably documented using the current MLA Style Manual. For citations of Internet resources, use the *Columbia Guide to Online Style*. Please submit three copies of manuscripts, with the author identified only on a separate cover letter. Include a self-addressed stamped envelope if you would like a copy returned. Submissions are anonymously reviewed by the Editorial Board. The editors aspire to respond within three months after the receipt of the submission.

Authors whose works are accepted for publication will be asked to submit final versions in both print and electronic form, following a style sheet that will be provided. Articles should be saved on 3.5 inch disks as rich text format files (files using the extension .rtf) or as MS Word files (using the .doc file extension). Tables should be saved in the program in which they were produced; authors should indicate program type on the disk. Illustrations should be submitted as camera-ready copy. Authors will also be asked to submit a 100-word biography for inclusion in the "Contributors" section of the journal.

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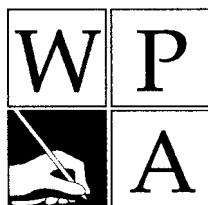
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Letter from the Editors

Learning Throughout the Curriculum

After a tragic fall in national and international events, we are happy to have regained our footing to bring you this issue of WPA. We are titling this issue “Learning Throughout the Curriculum” because of the varied nature of the subjects of these articles, and the many audiences that they address. Each of the pieces in this winter issue of WPA addresses a specific departmental program or component of a program, such as placement, the role of handbooks, and the use of technology. These essays could be framed also as examples of programs that work, for they all specifically treat the work being done in writing programs at individual colleges and universities. The authors address different types of student learning styles, teaching issues, and instructor training. And finally, these essays deal with assumptions about administration and teaching writing that are often invisible to us. Together, they provide WPAs with a look at the broader issues in writing program administration and the minute particulars.

We open the issue with an article by Diane Boehm, Eric Gardner, Deborah Huntley, Andrew Swihart, and Gary M. Lange on the possibilities for a writing center to enact collaboration between disciplines and operate as an instrument of change at the university level. The research that is represented in this article derives from a WPA research grant. The piece stages several voices on writing: that of a chemistry professor, an instructor of psychology, and a teacher of biology. All of these instructors worked in the writing center for a time, learning about the relationship between dialogue and writing as problem solving and a process of thinking. Each of the instructors was nervous at the start of their internship as a tutor, but, as the teachers talked about helping students modify their ideas, they themselves realized they were modifying their own ideas about writing.

Mary E. Hocks also provides insight into the power of collaboration between disciplines, and, in her case, the collaboration between technologies. She addresses interdisciplinary research that positions rhetoric as a “visual, verbal and oral persuasive activity.” She argues that students must be offered assignments that use a diverse array of media, from pencils to PowerPoint, but also that teachers must be offered sustained faculty development opportunities to realize the potential of many media to enhance teaching and learning. A “design-based pedagogy,” she stresses, is an active learning strategy that calls students to address the presentation of material for various audiences.

From these two essays that frame the university as a learning community, we move to Richard C. Raymond's essay on a freestanding writing department. Describing the separation of the rhetoric and writing department from the English department at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Raymond expresses the freedom and liberation that department members gained when they could collaboratively plan their program with a similarity of purpose and mission. The members of the new department were careful not to replicate the hierarchies of older university departmental models: all instructors are committed to teach in the lower-level courses and are dedicated to a notion of fluidity in course planning, course scheduling, and pedagogy. The model presented here is inspiring for its record of how a group of people can share ideas and governance. But Raymond also questions the role of the WPA in such a transformation, for, in a model of shared governance, the intellectual work of the WPA seems less overt, less quantifiable, less individual.

Also probing the assumptions behind WPA work is an insightful essay by Jessica Williams and Jacqueline Evans on composition handbooks. Their concern is with the most promising and useful handbook for ESL students, but they don't make specific recommendations of particular books in this piece. Rather, they engage the readers in a discussion of what issues the teacher must consider when selecting a handbook that will assist ESL students. Therefore, they reframe the question of how handbooks can help students to question how handbooks can assist teachers. One of their immediate conclusions is that handbooks can help to "formalize teachers' intuitive knowledge of grammar, especially in areas that are problematic" for ESL writers who lack the language skills to identify and describe complicated grammatical rules.

We hope that the enthusiasm of these writers for their work is contagious. Past president of WPA Charles Schuster has often reminded WPAs that they are experts at creating work for themselves, yet, as he admits, the work we produce is based on our desire to learn and to teach and to make the university a better place. We must always question, investigate, and propose new solutions. In the trying times since September 11, these essays strike the right tone: they promise change while maintaining a commitment to the human values that the university treasures.

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Teachers in the (Writing) Center

*Diane Boehm, Eric Gardner, Deborah Huntley,
Andrew Swihart, and Gary M. Lange*

Complex questions [...] can most effectively be undertaken by collaborative work among two or more people who possess the needed range of interests and expertise. (Damrosch 192)

The call for cross-disciplinary collaboration to address pressing issues within the modern American university has become increasingly forceful. Often, however, the difficulties inherent in creating such collegial teamwork in the face of Balkanized departments and multiple disincentives for collaboration can defeat even the most well-intentioned efforts. As David Damrosch points out in *We Scholars: Changing the Culture of the University*, both the insular departmental structures and the historical bias against collaborative scholarly work can make such collaboration difficult: “the basic responsibility for our difficulties in communication lies with the institutional structures within which we work, and with the organizational culture that our institutions foster” (9).

But avenues for team effort within institutional structures can and are created, and writing programs often serve as a locus for both faculty collaboration and faculty/student dialogue, understanding that “the struggle of writing, linked as it is to the struggle of thinking and to the growth of a person’s intellectual powers, awakens students to the real nature of learning” (Bean xiii). As many of our colleagues have demonstrated (Fulwiler and Young; Miraglia and McLeod; Walvoord; Kinkead and Harris), the collaboration which marks a successful writing program begins by identifying and developing those strategies which will be most effective within our own university culture.

To enhance cross-disciplinary commitment to its “complex question” of developing student writers, the Saginaw Valley State University writing program (based in the writing center) in the fall of 1997

developed a program called “Teachers in the Center,” in which faculty from various departments volunteer their time (generally 2 hours per week) to be trained in writing center strategies, work alongside our undergraduate peer tutors, and provide their unique disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives to our work with student writers. Faculty members from accounting, biology, chemistry, computer science, education, English, nursing, political science, and psychology have participated, most for several semesters.

A 1998 WPA research grant provided resources to assess the impact of this program on nine participating faculty from five different departments; informal assessment has continued since then. We conducted our grant research via questionnaires, interviews, and faculty journals, based on five research questions:

1. How have faculty adapted and applied their disciplinary conventions when working with students from other disciplines?
2. How does tutoring impact faculty understanding of writing processes and strategies for coaching student writers?
3. How does the tutoring experience impact faculty teaching? Faculty/student interactions outside of the Writing Center?
4. How does the tutoring experience impact the work of faculty within their departments?
5. How does the tutoring experience impact faculty perception of their role within the university at large?

This article describes the development of the program, reports the results of our study on the impact of the program through the voices of three program participants, and discusses what we have learned from this collaboration.

Development of the Program

Eric Gardner, English/Humanities (former Writing Center Coordinator and co-developer of the program): Like many programs, this one started with not only that magical list of what we wanted to do, but also a list of what we knew we *didn't* want to do. We knew that we wanted a program that generated faculty/student dialogue on issues of communication across the curriculum, that helped faculty better understand and implement successful strategies for working with student writers, and that could grow and produce growth for

all participants. And, of course, we wanted to complement rather than complicate the center of our writing center: our superb staff of undergraduate tutors.

Setting up the program presented a series of fascinating puzzles; in working through these puzzles, we consciously started small, tailored the program specifically to our university (including close examination of the faculty association contract), and created opportunities for continuous dialogue. At the outset, we identified five sets of questions and then worked to create a program that would answer those questions.

First, questions of compensation. We didn't want to burden already overworked faculty, but also didn't want to lobby for—or create a program—that would offer reduced teaching loads for participants; our lives were complicated enough already. Still, we didn't want to reduce participation to a (however valuable) “service activity”; we've always seen writing center work as a nexus of teaching, service, and scholarship. But calling it “teaching” would open another problem: we didn't want to open the door for seeing faculty participants as substitutes or replacements for our paid undergraduate tutors—especially given the propensity of some universities to put underpaid adjunct faculty in this role. To address these issues, we made the program totally voluntary and encouraged faculty members to put in (only) about two hours per week. We wrote glowing letters and gave even more glowing oral praise to key administrators who emphasized the multi-faceted professional development intrinsic in participation. We submitted a research grant to the WPA, including faculty members as co-investigators.

Second, questions of turf. Our writing center has the good fortune of being a free-standing unit. The coordinator is a faculty member who receives half of his/her load for writing center work, and we rotate this role among faculty from different disciplines; the writing program director reports directly to the vice-president of academic affairs. Thus we've always worked for a multi-level and truly multi-disciplinary writing center and actively sought out faculty from a wide range of disciplines. We also leaned heavily toward junior faculty—with the hopes of encouraging a cross-disciplinary sense of university community and continuous professional growth. We invited, cajoled, nudged, and got very, very lucky.

Third, questions of role-definition. We didn't want students flocking to faculty participants with the perception that they would get better tutoring. Initially, some of us thought that we might, in essence, have to “hide” faculty a bit. However, because a large number of our students are “non-traditional” in terms of age, we didn't have to work too hard to de-emphasize visual differences; we simply asked that faculty members

go by their first names (in person and on our photo board). We also took steps throughout the process to encourage faculty and student tutors to work and talk together—in part because we didn’t want our peer tutors to be intimidated. Resolving all of this was a lesson for us—because it demanded no resolution. Not only were our faculty participants immediately impressed—and even occasionally amazed—by our peer tutors, but they recognized that these folks knew something about teaching. And our student tutors—ever savvy—recognized that they had something to teach faculty—as well as much they could learn from faculty. That easy symbiosis wasn’t lost on students who came to the writing center. If they knew which tutors were faculty and which were students, they said nothing (either orally or in written anonymous evaluations) and varied their patterns little if at all.

Fourth, questions of training and integration. We didn’t want to differentiate much between the kinds of training we offered student tutors and what we would offer to faculty members. As with our student tutors, we wanted to encourage a wide range of tutoring styles (while consistently practicing the same basic policies and guidelines) and to set terms for debate and discussion of tutoring issues. Our approach to tutor-training is four-pronged. First, new tutors attend a seminar-style training (at least a day long, using readings from the field, etc.). After that training, they spend the first few weeks of a semester observing experienced student tutors conduct sessions, while reading, questioning, and discussing situations and practices. They then spend the next few weeks tutoring with an experienced tutor as a partner or observer. And finally, throughout their time with us, they receive a number of opportunities for further development.

We asked faculty to go through a similar training: a three-hour seminar including tutoring principles, strategies, and procedures such as record-keeping, as well as simulated tutorials, followed by a period of observing, partnering, and on-going discussion with us before soloing. (As an important aside, this process, in which student tutors participated actively in every facet, also allowed faculty and students to interact a great deal—beginning with the student tutors in the positions of experts.)

Fifth, questions of expertise. Let’s face it: content-area faculty are used to being viewed as experts on their subjects. At times, that expertise can cause folks to see only one right way of doing things. Bluntly, we didn’t want that kind of expertise—especially given how hard we’ve worked to create a multidisciplinary, multi-task writing center. More importantly, we have always wanted students to be experts on their own writing—to, in the perhaps now clichéd language, own

their documents. The faculty persona often makes it easy for students to surrender their work. Thus, we heavily discouraged faculty participants from using their tutoring time as extended office hours and from tutoring their current students. We encouraged faculty participants, like student tutors, to take whoever was next in the ever-forming queue—and this naturally led to them seeing students from a range of backgrounds and disciplines.

We believe we successfully avoided pitfalls—and established a program which continues to benefit everyone who participates.

Impact of the Program

Deborah Huntley, Chemistry:

The whole of science is nothing more than a refinement of everyday thinking.

—Einstein

Anyone who teaches writing would probably recognize that the word *science* could be replaced with the word *writing* in this quotation with no loss of validity. The processes of learning science and learning writing are really quite similar because at their cores both involve the process of learning to *think* analytically, abstractly, and logically. Through my work at the writing center, I have become more aware of the relationships between thinking, learning, problem-solving, and writing, and, as a result, have modified my approach to both classroom teaching and to student assignments.

My initial interest in being a mentor in the writing center stemmed from my conviction that effective communication is essential to good science. Having spent fourteen years as a research chemist at a federal research laboratory, I realized that even the most elegant and sophisticated experiments were not of much use to the scientific community until the results were published. Writing a good scientific paper requires very well-developed communication skills, since there is no room for ambiguity. I assumed, as the first science professor to join the Teachers in the Center program, that I would be asked to work with students on technical writing assignments.

This assumption was my first mistake. In fact, it was two years before I happened to work with a student on a science paper. Instead, I worked on lesson plans, business proposals, essays about history, literature, economics—all very interesting topics, but certainly not in my major area of expertise. While I enjoyed the work and even learned a few things, I initially was not convinced that my own teaching practices

would be significantly affected. I was also concerned that my lack of expertise in these areas would render my tutoring ineffective. It didn't take long to realize that, despite my lack of detailed knowledge in certain areas, I could provide significant input into student writing. Also, I eventually began to see essential parallels between writing and problem-solving as tools of learning that have been directly relevant to me as a chemistry professor.

In my chemistry classes, I focus heavily on problem-solving. A typical test or assignment might include a few "conceptual" questions requiring short essay answers, but the bulk of the work is using concepts to solve problems. Usually, this requires the student not only to have certain specific knowledge, but to be able to extend and integrate that knowledge in a new context. Although problem-solving in chemistry may appear very different from an essay in the humanities, in some ways they are remarkably similar. As an example, consider the following two test questions:

1. What is the expectation value, $\langle r \rangle$, for an electron in a hydrogen atom in its ground state? Calculate the most probable value, r^* , for the same system. Compare these values and comment on the significance of each. Why do we need two ways of describing r ?
2. Consider ways in which three of the following authors reconsider the basic tenets of Transcendentalism: Fuller, Douglass, Whitman, Dickinson, Alcott, Jewett. Note that your consideration should set out the basic conception of Transcendentalism and speak to some of the contexts surrounding the writers you examine.

These two questions seem very different. Indeed, their answers will look very different. The first requires the tools of integral calculus and to the uninitiated eye will look, as one of my students aptly described it, like "the Greek alphabet meets the Cuisinart." The second question, of course, uses the tools of language, and with any luck at all, will resemble any text with sentences, paragraphs, and even a thesis statement. Yet, despite these surface differences, these questions have many common features.

Both questions begin with concrete answers. The first question asks for a couple of numbers: $\langle r \rangle$ and r^* . The second question asks the students to set out the basic tenets of Transcendentalism. However, both questions move beyond the concrete. Each ends by asking the students to make comparisons involving some similarities and some fairly subtle

differences. To fully answer either of these questions, students are required to think analytically, abstractly and logically. Students must integrate prior knowledge and form new ideas.

In answering these questions, the writing and the calculus are the tools, not the problem itself. The process of learning is much the same across disciplinary boundaries. Good writing assignments teach students thinking skills as well as writing skills, just as well-written chemistry questions teach students problem-solving skills as well as mathematical skills. The goal of writing is not to produce words on a page, but to reach some deeper understanding. Similarly, the goal of problem sets is not to obtain a few numbers, but to understand something deeper about the physical world. In both cases, the processes are the tools of deeper learning.

While working in the writing center, I have plenty of opportunity to observe how students approach writing assignments. In my office hours and review sessions, I have opportunities to see how students approach problem sets. The parallel is again remarkable. Inexperienced writing students often expect to write their papers starting with the first sentence and ending with the last period. They do not expect their thinking to be modified by their writing; they expect writing to be as linear as reading. Chemistry students expect the same thing. They think that their solutions to a problem should be as linear as the ones in the “solutions manuals” or those I present in class as examples. A frequent complaint is, “I don’t know where to begin!” Student writers and problem solvers don’t often see the process of exploration that experienced writers and scientists go through. They don’t see all the chicken scratching, crumpled papers, false starts, and wrong turns that occur in any challenging endeavor.

Writing assignments and problem-solving go hand-in-hand as the tools of active learning, and both can be used effectively in my science classes. A major part of my job as a teacher is to structure assignments and classes to help students learn to find their ways through the complex and sometimes frustrating process of learning new material. A benefit of the writing center collaboration is that I have the chance to see well designed assignments and rubrics developed by my faculty colleagues, which I shamelessly and routinely borrow. I also see the less well-designed assignments and witness the consequent frustration, which has also helped me as a new instructor. Hopefully, my assignments have improved so that they really do achieve the goals of the course. I have also become more aware of the importance of providing early feedback so the students don’t get lost in the rubble of early mistakes.

As a science teacher, I struggle with evaluation of student writing; I find it difficult to strike an appropriate balance between scientific correctness, logical thinking, and the writing itself. Indeed, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish them. The difficulty in evaluation has taught me to develop more specific rubrics, which makes evaluation easier for me and provides useful information for the students.

As a participant in the Teachers in the Center program, I have learned a great deal about students' thinking processes as well as both a broader and a deeper understanding of how people learn. I view tutoring (in writing or in chemistry) as the opportunity to see the student's perspective and then to try to illuminate the subject from a different angle so that the student can see and understand a bit more. As a participant in the Teachers in the Center project, working with a broad cross-section of students, observing how students learn has improved my teaching practices.

Andrew Swihart, Psychology: Although I am, by training, a psychologist, with extensive experience in academic writing within my professional domain, the writing style/format issues familiar to psychologists have not been terribly relevant to my work in the writing center. Most frequently, I find myself addressing quality and clarity of student thought. Hence, accurate comprehension of primary source material, generation of a personally true intellectual response to the ideas and issues presented in the source material, logic of argumentation in the student response, sequencing of ideas for persuasive writing, and clarity of prose are the issues I address most frequently in my role as a tutor.

Tutoring in the writing center has reinforced my suspicion that many students flounder when writing because they haven't comprehended the material they are addressing, nor have they made a real intellectual effort to formulate a reasoned response to the material at hand. They often appear to assume they can crank out a completed "final draft" at first sitting, with only minor proofing for typos. In brief, many students appear to believe they can do academic writing without having to do thinking (as if writing were an academic task or chore analogous to doing laundry or mowing the yard, just something to "get done" so you can move on to the fun stuff). They do not appear to view writing as a *process* through which they a) identify what they do and do not understand about the material at hand; b) actually *modify their ideas and conclusions* as they attempt to put thought into prose; c) gain

novel insights into material merely by trying to write about it; and d) must *revise and redraft* their ideas until they achieve a sense of logic, coherence and closure.

And, thinking about this for a moment, why shouldn't it be this way? Many students may never have been asked to take genuine intellectual or emotional ownership of their writing or ideas before; consequently, they view scholarly writing as a process divorced from anything relevant to what they might personally think or feel about themselves or the world. With this in mind, it seems self-evident why I spend most of my tutoring time getting students to tell me aloud (not write) about the ideas they are addressing, questioning them about *why* they want to write what they write, and only then focusing on how they have organized their thoughts in prose. In our conversations, students teach me where they are struggling in their learning.

My tutoring experience has caused me to modify my teaching significantly. I now use in-class, brief writing exercises as a way of helping students identify for themselves whether they do/do not fully comprehend the concepts I am presenting. I also use short out-of-class writing assignments as a way of getting students to grapple with psychological constructs and theories. I have become less enamored of the traditional "term paper" as a teaching/learning device, and tend to reserve extended writing assignments (i.e., 10+ page papers) for my upper-level students. Also, I tend to spend less time actually grading these assignments; just getting the students to put forth genuine effort in completing the task achieves my teaching purpose. Finally, I have become acutely aware of the need to be detailed, clear and specific in the instructions for my assignments. Being in the writing center has afforded me the opportunity to see numerous assignments from other faculty; I now understand better that what may seem transparently self-evident to me may be utterly amorphous to others. I now have a better understanding that many students don't write poorly simply due to laziness or lack of investment. Rather, many of them simply have no idea what this process is all about; it's my job to teach them. Consequently, I spend a little less class time trying to teach psychology per se and more time trying to teach thinking, using writing as a vehicle to do such. And in my department, I find myself advocating for more writing by our students, and more rigor in our demands of them.

Tutoring has reaffirmed my core belief that I am, first, a member of a liberal arts faculty and, secondarily, an expert in psychological science. If I merely spent my time in my own psychology laboratory, with only psychology majors as my students, consorting only with other psychology department colleagues, my experience of our university

would be much the poorer. I hold dear the notion that I am here to educate these students as thinkers, to facilitate their personal and intellectual growth in the broadest sense, to help them discover how wonderful and full the world can be if only they will engage it openly and with thought. It just happens that psychology is the vehicle I employ in this effort. Consequently, I have always viewed my academic role as residing at the university, not department, level (not always the best way to make allies of your departmental colleagues). My involvement with the university's students through the medium of the Writing Center has only served to strengthen this notion. My allegiance is to my students' growth and to the university as the catalyst for such, not solely or even primarily to my discipline or department.

Gary M. Lange, Biology: When asked to be a Teacher in the Center at our university writing center, my immediate thought was to say "Ok! I will give it a try and see how I fit into the scheme of things." But almost as immediately my inner voice also chastised me and questioned, "How can I be an effective mentor or guide for students when I struggle so very much with my own writing?" It was with these diametrically opposed thoughts that I began my work in the writing center. As a biologist, my training in teaching has been focused on creative ways to deliver content-rich information about a specific discipline to students. I knew that writing and mentoring of writing were very different beasts altogether, and initially it was my plan to find a narrow niche where I could fit in. I presumed I would focus on guiding writers in their efforts to follow the rigid, highly structured, dry, but logically laid out papers describing science that I am accustomed to writing myself. I imagined myself focusing on the tenets of the scientific method, and felt comforted in thinking that my efforts would likely help others find the beauty and benefits of compressing text into simple, concise, and logical phrases. This comforting thought proved to be a false—but useful—security blanket for me to hold onto as I began my work in the Center.

Even though I, like other Teachers in the Center, did spend a considerable amount of time being prepared as writer mentors—each of us worked collaboratively with experienced writing tutors before venturing out on our own in the writing center—the first several students I mentored "solo" still elicited the white-knuckled stress response in me. A majority of my earliest work ended up in assisting ESL writers, who wanted my critique of their work to point out grammatical errors. This proved a fortuitous starting point for me; these wishes were the easiest and most congruent ways I could help while staying in my "comfort

zone.” However, as I was presented time and time again with this same task, I began to more fully embrace the “bigger picture agenda” of the writing center, namely to guide writers collaboratively, even (gasp!) writers outside of my discipline, in efforts to help their writing become more effective.

Typically, ESL students’ previous efforts in learning the English language have been structured toward successful completion of the extensive battalion of language proficiency examinations required before they leave their native country. While these students often have a good grasp of grammatical principles and a reasonable grasp of syntax, they often find it difficult to interpret the nuances and colloquial phrases inherent in many of their writing assignments at the university. Working with ESL students has been very rewarding for me because our relationship ends up being mutually beneficial—I help them to more fully understand and achieve the goals of their writing assignments and they in turn help me to see again the vibrancy and artistry in writing as communication that is often overlooked when speaking with only native speakers.

What I came to understand from both native speakers and ESL writers is that our primary role in the writing center (and arguably I have concluded, also in our guidance of writers of any discipline) is to help our writers find and define the intended audience for their work—as interdisciplinary an audience as possible. In doing so, I was able to again see a facet of writing as education I had long ago misplaced in my mind: the instructor needs always to perceive his/her audience (the students in a class) as interdisciplinary.

As I became more aware of misconceptions that could easily develop from ambiguous assignments, I reassessed the writing assignments I gave my students. This in turn led to rather profound shifts in several of my courses. The tradition in a discipline such as Biology has been the fact-filled lecturer, orating his or her knowledge before a large hall filled with students. While this method has a time and place, there is room for so much more. A series of meaningful transformations took place in my own courses as a result of being part of the Teachers in the Center program:

1. The development of broad-based, open-ended writing assignments in introductory courses such as General Biology. In this course, I now include a series of writing exercises to help students see the variety of methods of writing; e.g., I have students write both a traditional scientific review and an expository essay based on observations made at a local zoological park.

2. The incorporation of a series of writing assignments in my anatomy and physiology course to help students bridge the chasm between scientific knowledge and daily life (one particularly well-received assignment gives students a “patient” with a particular affliction; the writer must explain both scientifically and in common language the patient’s prognosis).
3. A revamping of my efforts in my upper division courses (Endocrinology, Ethology, Neurobiology, and Comparative Physiology) away from traditional lecture. Instead, I have focused on training students in the practice of a specific discipline in ways similar to what a practicing scientist does in the laboratory or field (students actively conduct library research, write to colleagues, produce literature critiques, and develop and design experiments, all with an emphasis on effective communication).
4. Development of the annual Department of Biology Poster Session event. This event replicates the feel and look of a scientific conference. Students conduct and report on research projects in poster format to a university-wide audience of other students, faculty, and administration. Additionally, guest speakers invited to this event give students a true taste of what they can expect in a scientific conference if they pursue graduate or professional school.

My participation has also had the unexpected benefit of rejuvenating me, by helping me to step outside the rigors of my discipline and again view our role as educators in a far broader sense. Finally, my work in the writing center has helped me to see new ways to help my science students see how essential good writing practice is for all of us.

What We Have Learned

Teachers know when their approach is working: the performance of their students improves. (Bean 265)

How do we know whether our collaboration is “working”? What can compositionists learn from such a program?

Certainly there are potential pitfalls in any such program. With four years of history behind us, we have seen that some faculty cannot easily move from the writing practices embedded in their disciplines to the very different types of writing students may bring in for review. Others find the time commitment difficult to sustain over an entire semester or longer. A few, finding themselves lacking the vocabulary or methods to

identify the problems in a student's work or provide new strategies for the writer, decide this work is not for them. In those instances, we thank them for their participation and recruit anew.

Overall, however, our research indicates that when faculty members work in a writing center, significant changes occur in their individual teaching practices; they develop expertise and cultivate best practices in a number of ways.

First, faculty develop greater awareness of the issues facing student writers, becoming more empathetic and more understanding of the struggles student writers face. As faculty become more aware of the parallel processes of thinking, learning, and writing (not taught in most PhD programs), they focus more on improving students' thought and revising processes (rather than merely evaluating a written product or justifying a grade) and are better able to anticipate potential misunderstandings or areas which require clarification. This change in attitude generates more reflection on their own classroom practices and a greater willingness to approach problems in student writing analytically rather than judgmentally. Reminded of their own struggles to become proficient writers, faculty become more likely to see problems in student work as a reflection of learning that needs to occur, rather than as evidence of student laziness or irresponsibility (and are more likely to address student errors as thinking variants rather than as "irritants").

Second, *every* participating faculty member has redesigned course assignments to make them more effective (i.e., more likely to generate the kind of learning the assignments were designed to accomplish). Teachers in the Center have also learned to articulate the traits characteristic of effective student writing in all disciplines, and use those traits to develop and improve strategies and rubrics for feedback and assessment (as the three reflections above illustrate). Faculty now also see their assignments in the larger context of the university and are able to help students see parallels and differences in the writing of varied disciplines.

Faculty further discover that addressing the issues of non-native speakers of English may require strategies and methods very different from those used with native speakers. They are less likely to look for "quick fixes," and become more aware that errors in language may not accurately reflect the complexity of a student's thinking or understanding of course content.

Finally, participating faculty have often been surprised by how much they enjoyed their work in the writing center. When they began, most saw their work as a service to the university; after awhile, however,

many observe that they have gained more than they have given. As they experience the satisfaction of working one-on-one with students who are at a “teachable moment,” they become eager to share their success stories. As a corollary, tutoring faculty have also provided validation of the writing center’s mission. As student and faculty tutors discuss strategies and concerns, hierarchy dissolves into a communal space where each is invested in the success of others.

Equally significant shifts occur as participating faculty change the way they see their role within the University and become stakeholders in the development of student writers. As they understand more fully the need for *all* faculty to be committed to developing student writing proficiency, they now consider it “irresponsible” to defer such duties to any single department. The poster session which originated with the biology department, for example, has become an annual cross-disciplinary campus event, with multiple departments displaying conference-quality poster presentations.

And as faculty become more open to the varied tasks and purposes for writing in other disciplines and enthusiastic about contributing to the work of “an intellectual community” with a vision larger than that of their own department, the ongoing conversations, new insights, and larger vision go with them into new roles: department chair, grant development teams, leaders in a new General Education curriculum.

The WPA research grant provided a lens for us to examine our program of cross-disciplinary faculty collaboration in a Writing Center and motivated us to continue the program. In addition to this article (hardly the usual audience for a former research chemist, psychologist, or biologist), it has generated three presentations at conferences which these faculty would otherwise not have attended: the 20th Annual Lilly Conference on College and University Teaching, the East Central Writing Centers Association Conference, and the first Lilly-North Conference. The network of participants has become a continuing source of mutual encouragement for innovative teaching. Thus we believe that the Teachers in the Center program has not only greatly enhanced our work with students; we see growing evidence that this collaboration has also begun to re-shape our institution’s organizational culture, providing a means for disciplinary constructs and language to give way to a search for over-arching principles. We offer it as a collaborative model adaptable to other universities and campus cultures.

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Using Multimedia to Teach Communication Across the Curriculum

Mary E. Hocks

Introduction

Writing intensive courses offered in departments across the country reflect the wide range of written, oral, visual and electronic practices fostered by new technologies. The emergence of programs that don't just focus on writing, but Electronic Communication across the Curriculum (ECAC)—a phrase coined by Donna Reiss, Richard A. Selfe, and Art Young—underscores the importance of using curricula and assignments that emphasize the visual and oral communication taking place within electronic environments (17).¹ From the early listservs like MBU-L and WAC-L to online scholarly resources like *Academic.Writing*, we have long traditions in Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) of using electronic systems to exchange information, to create academic communities around writing and to encourage electronic discourse. Projects that build ongoing and visible electronic information resources for teaching on a national level, while also keeping teachers deeply connected through reflection on teaching and learning experiences, include the work of Michael Kelly, Joe Essid and Reiss with the Epiphany Project housed at Virginia Commonwealth University, Randy Bass's work in American Studies online at Georgetown University, and the electronic journal *Academic.Writing* (aw.colorado.edu) run by faculty at Colorado State University. These kinds of nationally recognized efforts require time and commitment to the building of research resources and active participation by teachers. They work because they are driven by a diverse vision of how we reflect on and transform our teaching using new practices and technologies, and they help sustain teachers nationally who are engaged in this work. Often begun and supported by grants, they must then be maintained by these universities and the considerable efforts of our colleagues who design and manage these projects.

Local efforts and programs that link WAC with technology probably have the most lasting effect on institutions, as Todd Taylor argues in his analysis of using Web-supported WAC to build a local community (134-35). That effect occurs because faculty members perceive real changes in their teaching—what the study *In the Long Run* describes as “philosophies and attitudes about teaching,” “new confidence and enthusiasm,” and perceptions of “what works” and what doesn’t in WAC methodology (Walvoord, et al. 78, 137). The ambitious study *Transitions: Teaching Writing in Computer-Supported and Traditional Classrooms*, for example, tracks the long-term changes in teaching fostered through local faculty development and the on-going classroom-based research in computer-assisted writing and WAC courses (Palmquist et al.). Thus, in spite of the logistical struggles and various learning curves for faculty across disciplines described by Taylor, by Essid and Donna J. Hickey, and by the faculty at Colorado State, these scholars all found it most worthwhile to encourage the grassroots efforts of faculty building their own electronic materials in our own institutions.

Local WAC programs at colleges and universities are increasingly wired in various ways and many, including my own, are now caught up in statewide initiatives for integrating technology into the curriculum and for creating online courses. The trend of delivering courses through a single, online course management system has become quite popular, largely because such systems have streamlined student access, faculty training, the campus management and system-wide commitment of technological resources, and even the collection of highly useful data such as electronic writing portfolios. However, at the same time, these regimented management systems can limit faculty teaching practices and student learning experiences. Administrative controls can cast students in the role of passive receiver even as they engage in electronic discourse. Adding a Web-enhanced component to a course that does little more than deliver electronic information and provide a chatting space is frighteningly similar to the perception of adding on writing to the "real" content of a course, a perception that WAC Directors must continually fight. When pedagogies are seen as add-ons, nothing really changes in terms of the epistemological assumptions behind how students access and understand the content. Too often, the practices institutionalized with these programs cast faculty as content experts simply waiting to re-package or sell their knowledge in the latest, sexiest form. Web-based course packages can, like any other technology, simply promote an information dump that's more convenient and doesn't waste paper. In fact, any packaged software can foster passivity by presenting

certain kinds of interactivity in preset ways—think of the point and click of the Web page, the routine question and answer of the bulletin board, the flying text on the PowerPoint screen. Unless students are taught both to notice these assumptions in the software and to counter them with active, design-based learning experiences, students once again become passive receivers of information in our technology-enhanced courses.

To accomplish a truly active critical pedagogy, however, first requires a new orientation for faculty who are teaching with technology. When looking at the recent history of educational electronic communication practices, we find that new technologies, like writing, can initially inspire faculty and foster innovative approaches to teaching and learning. Computers and composition scholars firmly established the student-centered collaborative pedagogies possible with new writing technologies, which in turn helped propel the fusion of WAC methods with technology-enhanced teaching.² Increasingly, research in professional and technical communication has influenced practices in WAC programs integrating professional writing activities into the curriculum, especially by offering current information on the flexible skills students need with communication technologies in order to become successful professional communicators in their workplaces.³ Computers and composition and professional and technical writing practices all help establish that the traditional belletristic academic essay cannot be the only kind of writing students do in college. As Lester Faigley and Susan Romano point out, millions of students now bring to college the experiences of reading and writing on electronic networks, and this kind of electronic communication intrinsically disrupts traditional literacy practices (49). The new interactive digital media technologies can support and inspire a student-centered and constructivist pedagogy, partly because Web development tools, multimedia presentation tools, and media editing systems—graphics, sounds, video, animations—allow students to take the lead and help one another with visual and interactive forms of online research and communication. When using technology where students get to take the lead, the teacher can shift roles from lecturer and expert to collaborator and participant: many times, students and teachers learn together, with students having the upper hand where technology is concerned.

To keep the spirit of this pedagogy and of WAC faculty development intact while also resisting the reductive and standardizing impulses of courseware, I want to advocate a particular kind of local faculty development program and make a case for some key practices: an immersive hands-on approach to working with faculty who incorporate

writing and technology into their courses, and an online writing pedagogy that incorporates interactive design projects using whatever tools are available—from pen and paper to digital video editing software. Ultimately, I argue that engaging students with multimedia production and presentation tools allows them to deconstruct the multi-sensory information available to them, to become designers of knowledge. Multimedia production projects—from the publishing of Web pages to composite video with voiceovers to the oral presentation of slides—can encourage students' work to take a visible and public rhetorical character. If students can engage in the process of production and assemble meanings for an audience of peers or professionals, they have truly redefined what they think of as research, they have activated a sense of purpose for their work, and they have recognized the impact of audience on whatever communication they do. When those projects are linked to community organizations, as they are in many professional writing courses, the rhetorical contexts of purpose and audience are made real for students. These strategies probably have the strongest presence in technical communication programs, but they can be used successfully in any course that emphasizes communication via digital technologies. When used strategically within a WAC program to teach communication practices, multimedia projects increase and expand a student's sense of audience while the work designing and producing multimedia documents helps students develop multiple, interconnected literacies.

It is a given that integrating multimedia projects into courses across the curriculum requires considerable effort, preparation, and new ways of thinking about teaching on the part of the faculty. Using a WAC faculty development model works well for integrating technology-enhanced learning into courses because WAC workshops have long been known to provide one of the best settings for productive interchange and inspiration about new methods for teaching and learning.⁴ This essay advocates immersing faculty in interactive multimedia technologies and supporting them as they create and teach design projects from across the disciplines. If we want to promote active, student-centered learning with technology, we need to try it ourselves first and also reflect critically on our experiences as teachers. I focus here on my experiences with an intensive faculty development program used to integrate multimedia technology as a tool for teaching and learning communication across the curriculum so that I can evaluate the immersive approach to faculty development and discuss how, using Richard Selfe's terminology, to "sustain" it. After evaluating my experiences at two institutions—a small liberal arts college and also a large state university—I will summarize

how to implement some of these technology-enabled practices given different amounts of time and resources. When Web-based courseware systems are economical and streamlined, why teach faculty members to design documents and use complicated multimedia software programs? When complete and integrated Web-based access finally arrives on campus, why bother to set up an electronic classroom or any physical space for teaching and learning new technologies? I'll return to these questions in light of my experiences.

Faculty Development in Multimedia Across the Curriculum

Spelman College is a historically Black College (HBCU) for women in Atlanta that serves about 2,000 students. We began in 1996 an intensive faculty training program on the use of multimedia technology for teaching writing, communication, and research skills across the curriculum. This program was built upon a powerful history of faculty collaboration and interdisciplinarity at the college and a mission instilled by two well-known scholars and Spelman alumna who founded both the writing program and the women's studies program, Jacqueline Jones Royster and Beverly Guy-Sheftall.⁵ These two program directors had high visibility on campus and extensive administrative support—Royster was actually working as a dean when she designed the current writing center. Both program directors began innovative and wide-reaching faculty development projects that focused on diversity, writing across the curriculum, and teaching with technology. Their impact, and that of any subsequent director of this particular writing program, can be best described as influence—the kind of influence that Thomas Amorose describes as the small school WPA's most effective tool, especially during “those junctures in the cultural life of the institution where issues or plans essential to how the institution defines itself are being considered” (95).

Given the program's new mission to integrate multimedia technology into the campus curriculum, I came on board to help faculty members design classes in various content areas at the college that featured multimedia resources in a networked computer classroom. These efforts were centered in a well-established writing center and a multimedia-equipped classroom and development lab funded largely through a Title III Grant targeting HBCUs and funneled through campus operating budgets. The funds obtained from a Mellon Foundation Grant were used to hire consultants and create a new series of multimedia faculty workshops, to hire and train student assistants, and to support faculty through course release and classroom support during course delivery.

The courses culminated in a design project that would allow students to practice multimedia production skills developed over the semester and use these new skills to present their own academic research, and their responses to texts and other media in the course. By production skills, I mean that students edited videos, recorded sounds, created and edited graphics, and constructed Web pages, all on computers. But before these courses began, the faculty were introduced to all these same activities. They engaged in a two-week hands-on seminar that immersed them in all the newest multimedia production tools at the time. These hands-on workshops, which lasted three hours each, used consultants and assistants and focused on the creation of teaching materials designed by each faculty member. These faculty members came predominantly from the humanities, arts, and social sciences and were fairly new to technology-enhanced teaching. In the two weeks, we had the luxury of introducing a number of technologies to support writing and instruction: Microsoft PowerPoint for oral presentations; Adobe PageMill for Web-page authoring; scanners and Adobe PhotoShop for image editing; Adobe Premiere for Sound and Video Editing. We also included sessions on electronic conferencing using The Daedalus Integrated Writing Environment and analyzed the transcripts to see how our discussions about teaching practices took shape online. This training program culminated in the faculty member teaching a new or existing course in an electronic classroom using instructional multimedia—usually for the first time. They attended a number of follow-up workshops and presentations throughout the year while teaching and evaluating their courses.

In the spirit of the WAC program that inspired these multimedia courses, faculty development was the primary focus and the means for infusing the curriculum with new forms of teaching and learning. By building technology into the Writing Program, we created an integrated approach that fused computers and composition practices with new media technologies, that provided intensive hands-on training and support for faculty to create their own instructional multimedia resources, and that extended to instructional support in the computer writing classroom. This work also included typical WAC work of intensive collaboration on the course syllabi, on the design of writing assignments and projects for the classes, and on the techniques for day-to-day teaching in the computer classroom. With a faculty development lab adjacent to the computer writing classroom where faculty would be teaching, we had a center for training, learning and independent work by faculty and advanced students. Along with my collaborator, Daniele

Bascelli, and our student assistants, we provided on-going support to faculty while they developed and taught their courses for the three-year cycle of the grant.⁶

Bringing a wide range of disciplines and faculty members into dialogue in an electronic communication across the curriculum program deepened our collective understanding of teaching and learning using writing, critical thinking, and new technology. The faculty development program stressed pedagogical practices and ways in which teachers could more fully involve students in the process of research, discussion and discovery in a multi-modal and collaborative environment. After completing workshops, the faculty members used the electronic teaching environment, a networked classroom with windows in the middle of the writing center which arranged students in clusters and really discouraged lecture, but which also had a traditional breakout room nearby for face-to-face discussions. Some taught in this classroom in spite of its challenges and frustrations. Faculty were enthusiastic about the role that multimedia, especially Web resources, could play in presenting materials that went beyond course texts and increasing students' understanding of course content. Faculty members collected and developed extensive online research resources for their courses—resources that were then often added to by their students. Students and faculty agreed to make their work available to the public, primarily through academic conferences and the on-going presentation of this work on the Spelman College Writing Center Website (www.wcenter.spelman.edu). These faculty members reported an increased use of hands-on activities and less reliance on traditional lecture formats for presenting information. Even better, students reported that they took a more active role in the construction and design of these courses, and they learned much more from their expanded access to other audiences and to one another.

Evidence of these results emerged in interactions between the faculty and their students. So, for example, a Shakespeare professor who redesigned her class for the multimedia classroom cites the usefulness of Website links and electronic mail to get access to and communicate with theater professionals around the country. More importantly, she argues that the class Website (see http://www.wcenter.spelman.edu/ENG310_F98proj/Shake.html), designed and created by students to explore issues about colorblind casting of actors in current Shakespeare productions and film adaptations, "makes an actual contribution to Shakespeare studies." The project taught them "investigative technique, analytical skills, and something about the process of publishing and taking responsibility for one's scholarly work" (McDermott 4). The

class Website becomes an authentic learning experience that has brought students in touch with the content and goals of the course, as well as a broader audience of professionals. The sense of audience was amplified for these students who had contact with theatres and the opportunity to balance and present their ideas with the wide range of opinions on colorblind casting.

The use of multimedia for teaching and learning deeply impacted the individual teachers' classrooms as well as the campus learning environment. Getting away from traditional classrooms allowed faculty to develop a variety of more interactive class sessions. Group projects and multimedia-supported oral presentations increasingly became a focal point for these courses; this allowed faculty to encourage different presentational modalities, visual learning, and extensive feedback from instructors, students, and other members of the college community. For example, the Victorian Literature professor who adapted her course reflected, "I wanted to shift the pedagogical paradigm from read-write to a multimodal experience of literature" (Parekh). Many projects in her course incorporated video clips from film adaptations of the literary works, as well as complimentary background music, colors and spatial arrangements on the screen. She asked students to design multiple methods of engagement with the course materials, while communicating their findings to an actual audience of students and professors in oral multimedia presentations several times during the semester-long course. As a result of these projects, the teacher noted that students engaged in close and multiple examinations with texts and other media. They mentioned having fun and pride in their work, they inspired one another, and they seemed to use more diverse learning practices than the traditional read/write model of the literature classroom. These two English teachers both valued this successful application of computer-enhanced writing pedagogy, research, and Web design to the study of literature and both have presented these courses to their peers at professional literary conferences. Each has acknowledged the central role that time management, peer learning and flexibility plays in these kinds of projects. In spite of the inevitable frustrations of doing many new things and with technology failing to behave properly, both professors assessed and evaluated these courses as successful and truly formative teaching and learning experiences. Each stated she would offer it again in modified form, beginning with a more selective process for deciding what technologies to use and how to use them.

Are these teachers' experiences and reflections representative enough to suggest that we immerse faculty in time-consuming and expensive multimedia tools? I would argue that, unlike courseware or online

course management systems, these authoring and production tools have always offered and still offer the most promise for experimentation, for creating new forms of knowledge and for enhancing students' understanding of multimodal rhetorics. Multimedia production tools allow students to explore rhetoric as visual, verbal, and oral persuasive activity rather than just have them follow a preset path prescribed by the easier software's palette of options. Teaching multimedia design projects using interactive video and sound production tools, for example, can teach students compositional and rhetorical skills that are both verbal and visual (Hocks 158). This is precisely why composition scholars keep advocating the use of multimedia texts and authoring for teaching writing: learning HTML language as rhetorical practice (Heba), using educational MOOs to design and navigate online spaces (Haynes and Holmevik, and Joyce), analyzing interactive multimedia documents that collapse the arbitrary distinctions between words and visual information (Wysocki), and using digital video and voiceover recording to let students create and tell their own stories (Cushman, Lambert and Mullen).⁷

Once faculty see the full potential of multimedia, they can actually rethink how knowledge is both constructed and received in their fields.⁸ Teaching faculty to design their own Websites, rather than assigning that work to a technical person, means they have the opportunity to rethink a course project or lecture as something that links the connections between visual arts, performance, and, in this case, literature in one semiotic space. They consider visual presentations, films, readings and music together so that each mode becomes a part of the way into understanding meaning and messages as rhetorical. Because faculty engage in the process of production themselves and see how digital tools actually construct knowledge and create representations of "truth," they then can try to develop this kind of process-based learning for their students. They truly rethink their approach to teaching in terms of active learning, with the spirit of experimentation that they themselves have experienced, and then transfer this exploratory approach to their students. I was surprised by teachers' willingness to take on very difficult software programs when they had little or no experience with technology at all. I was amazed at the ideas the faculty came up with through the trial-and-error processes of trying things themselves and getting frustrated during the time-consuming hours in the lab. Nationally-known and successful faculty development programs like Computers in Writing Intensive Classrooms, offered each summer at Michigan Technological University, follow this model of immersing faculty in new technologies and in intensive, on-going reflection on

teaching. I truly believe that a faculty institute using this immersive approach best helps us to completely rethink and then decide how to redesign our courses using technology.

Of course, faculty I worked with faced a substantial workload in terms of time spent learning software and developing new course materials. They had lots of frustrating experiences, and many were skeptical about teaching in a truly decentered classroom. I believe it is important for us as faculty to try new things, to become frustrated and to experience new approaches ourselves in ways that resemble the students' point of view. We then see the amount of time certain projects will take, and the limitations that we need to impose, and we are in a much better position to critically evaluate the use of new technologies. We see the importance of defining the goals and the scope of the process, and not just focusing on outcomes or end products. We also will have better evidence for the administrators who are asking us to do this work now and in the future as digital media technologies become more widely incorporated into education.

Why is it better for students to struggle with the challenges of multimedia design projects? Using technology-enhanced discourses, students can use multimedia to engage in what The New London Group calls multiliteracies, or literate practices that include verbal, visual, spatial, audio, and gestural ways of making meaning (Cope and Kalantzis 26). That is, they experiment and disrupt traditional forms, they cross boundaries between texts and other forms, they build a bridge between written and visual literacy, and they redefine research and the process of creating knowledge in new ways. They learn substantially from one another and take pride in their work, which makes the struggles and the time involved well worth it according to their teachers. Students have the opportunity to enact their own voices and visions in their design projects and, often, they do so for an actual audience of peers or members of their community. Designing for audiences in multiple modes makes student work much more engaging and purposeful than most traditional writing assignments ever could.

Growing a New WAC Program

Most program directors would agree that beginning an immersive faculty development program is simple when one has seed resources from a grant, and a small, fairly interactive college community. When I moved to the larger state institution across downtown Atlanta to begin a new WAC program, I found a much wider use of technology in general, but, at the same time, fewer resources and an institutional culture that had not emphasized or supported reflective teaching practices until

fairly recently. Interestingly, the momentum on this campus recently has been to standardize teaching practices and faculty development around the use of WebCT. The State University System's adoption of WebCT has brought many courses at Georgia State University online and so many faculty members are integrating it into traditional courses and are receiving individualized training. Some of the faculty members developing WAC courses are also using WebCT, but they think of the online environment as a delivery medium rather than an approach to teaching and learning. And as of yet, the integration of Web-based course management technologies has not been strategically linked to the general education curriculum or to faculty development programs on campus.

My concept of "growing" refers to building the grassroots support through faculty seminars and retreats I use at Georgia State University. Because we began this program with no specific requirements of the faculty or the students, we literally started with the all-important budget for faculty development. We've been able to grow the program slowly and steadily by giving faculty summer grants for attending workshops and by beginning a writing consultants program. Following the practice of many WAC programs, I have incorporated the week-long or two-week summer seminar into the grant awards because it captures faculty attention and supports their sustained work on a specific institutional project that they will then implement within their own departments. The seminar participants all work on a specific syllabus or departmentally based project throughout the summer. On each day of the seminar, they draw on discussions about topics like online writing environments, electronic portfolios, or evaluation, and then they write the assignments, the criteria, the rubrics for assessment, and the rhetorical purposes for using writing in that course or that discipline. Faculty share these drafts with one another throughout the week, and then revise and share their work. Increasingly, these activities take place in part over electronic networks using e-mail, Webboards or on WebCT. This process engages faculty in some deep revision of their own work as course designers. The time commitment justifies a summer grant of \$2,000 with the understanding that faculty will disseminate the results of their curricular work in their departments and more widely at local presentations and national conferences.

In discussions with both outside consultants and Georgia State faculty members, we emphasize important understandings about "best practices" for WAC and computer-enhanced courses.⁹ With the support of these summer grants from the WAC Program, faculty members at my institution are developing assignments in courses that emphasize

using writing as a tool for learning and for communication (drawing on Young), while also focusing students on writing for specific audiences and purposes that are meaningful to their disciplines. Using the distinction between assignments that emphasize writing to learn and writing to communicate to various audiences, faculty members have developed assignments to integrate into courses and provide feedback, often using Web pages and online discussion forums to support these activities. Many faculty also use teaching assistants from their own departments as writing consultants to help read first drafts and provide feedback on the students' writing in progress. Though not without its problems and power issues, attaching these consultants to the courses themselves works well because the students see the work and the revision/feedback process as integral to the course; yet, students also see the consultant as part of the classroom learning community. This cross-disciplinary work can also complement the professional development of graduate students. Writing Consultants gain opportunities to work on innovative courses in addition to composition, to assist with course projects, and to teach using sophisticated media and technology. Graduate students in Rhetoric and Composition who collaborate with teaching assistants from other departments gain valuable experience in key areas that impact our field from those other disciplines.

So far on our campus, the tendency has been to integrate WebCT strategically into very large required lecture courses in an effort to enhance and manage student interactivity in the online environment. For example, students in introductory political science are now reading and responding to one another's work online in small groups. Pilot efforts to fuse writing across the curriculum initiatives with technology-enhanced teaching have emerged from specific departments. Thus, the English Department is developing electronic portfolios for majors and developing professional writing courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels that use community-based technology projects (see Hocks, Grabill, and Lopez). Faculty members who decide or are "asked" by their chairs to develop such a course might get some support in the form of release time at the departmental level, and then they receive individualized training from a central support unit. Admittedly, the support for this kind of online teaching is excellent on this campus; yet, I observe that it does not intrinsically impact faculty perceptions about their teaching; rather, it is viewed as an information delivery service and a convenience to commuting students. I also notice that it is seen as more work, that it largely rests on the shoulders of younger faculty and those teaching large courses. In other words, many of the pitfalls that WAC initiatives have experienced historically are appearing while

incorporating technology into teaching on our campus. Our new Center for Teaching and Learning with Technology is now working to become an advocate for the faculty and correct some of these problems. As of yet, this center does not have affiliated faculty or adequate administrative funding to support the faculty as they engage in research and course development using technology.

How does one thus advocate for a center in this environment of standardized electronic teaching environments and course delivery? A small private school typically has a culture that emphasizes teaching, and the mere fact of proximity allows teachers to center around a teaching space, i.e., a classroom that allows pedagogical collaboration and experimentation to take place. I believe that—regardless of the size of the institution—campuses need a teaching and technology center with a clear agenda tied to the research and teaching missions of the institutions—whether it be the writing center at Spelman College, the Center for New Media at the Georgia Institute of Technology, or a center where on-going research on teaching takes place. All activities need not occur face-to-face, although most of us who teach writing are still tied to the classroom-based model of computer-enhanced courses rather than true distance-learning models. What is most important is that we maintain the focus on composition/authoring and response to promote active, hands-on learning in these new online learning environments. Critique and design of multimedia documents, expanding the definitions of writing, exploring interactivity, thinking about audiences other than the teacher or external to the university—these are projects based in current composition practices using new technologies. The design processes and pedagogies of a studio art class match up more closely to the kinds of learning experiences we want students to encounter when they engage in electronic writing. My own pedagogy of design is really tied to the physical classroom and being able to observe and intervene in the production of work, as well as the collaborations that take place there. But my experience at these two institutions has shown me that writing-intensive classes can benefit from being centered in a dedicated electronic classroom, a wired writing center, or a set of online practices that foster active learning and experimentation. As Walvoord argues, adapting to institutional change and actual needs while staying on the "side" of faculty is essential for determining the long-term success of any WAC program (71-72). From designing courses to articulating goals for writing and technology, faculty members need to remain the judges of how and when to integrate WAC and computer-supported instruction into their courses. In order to be effective in institutionalizing both WAC and computer-supported instruction, campuses must provide faculty the

time and support they need in order to think about how and when such activities can enhance learning within the context of their own classes and disciplines.

Final Suggestions

I feel most fortunate: I have been permitted, under this rubric, to think and write about teaching and have been forced to learn about other subjects and worlds of discourse not my own. I think of myself now not so much as just a member of an English department, but as a citizen of the university. (Herrington and Moran 231)

Herrington and Moran capture with these words how WAC can change the way we perceive ourselves and our roles in the university largely in terms of the kind of community WAC creates. *In the Long Run* documents how faculty tend to remember and try to maintain the kind of community they experience with faculty development (Walvoord et al. 140). I like to think that WAC practices can maintain some of this idealism and also connect to something very tangible: the importance of technology in our work and lives. However, it is essential that those of us involved in electronic WAC programs use our opportunities to build communities, virtual and physical, as well as valuable and sustainable practices centered on teaching and learning. It is also essential that we tie electronic discourse practices to critical pedagogies that encourage students' diversity, their creation of knowledge, and their impact on real audiences for their work. I believe we need to make arguments at our institutions and also nationally for faculty development and support that is truly modeled on the best WAC practices, practices that actually transform our experiences as teachers. This work will indeed require raising funds, by first raising the awareness of campus administrators about the amount of support required to sustain efforts that truly transform teaching over the long term, and then raising the standards for how we support faculty in terms of their workload and their scholarship of teaching. These final suggestions are meant to provide arguments and starting points for beginning this work:

1. Link WAC to a center for teaching and technology that is faculty-centered and tied to the curriculum and research mission. This center can be a writing center, a research center, or a center for

teaching and learning, or it can be a well-designed Web site, as long as it is linked to the campus mission and has active, ongoing participation by faculty.

2. Incorporate into WAC a pedagogy of multiliteracies that includes experimentation and play in courses that emphasize writing, visual literacy, technology, and oral communication.
3. Link student design work to community organizations at every opportunity.
4. Find resources to support faculty when they are experimenting with technology, critically discussing its uses, implementing it in their classes, and assessing student learning and uses of technology.

We know that a well-supported and active group of faculty can best help coordinate and leverage technology resources on campus and promote new approaches to teaching and research. If faculty are truly engaged in teaching multiliteracies, then that approach can be tied directly to a curriculum in writing, to learning outcomes for general education, or to research on teaching and learning. But until faculty jump in and try the technologies themselves and critically assess their value for teaching, these initiatives will remain abstract and distant concepts. By building reflective practices and a local community that keep us thinking critically about the more complex activities of technological literacy, we can best develop and then sustain those teaching practices that will carry WAC into the future.

Notes

¹ Several articles in this important collection outline ways to incorporate faculty development into electronic communication course curricula and build local community in ways that draw upon successful practices in writing across the curriculum and writing center practices (e.g., Essid and Hickey, Hocks and Bascelli, Palmquist et. al., and Taylor).

² See, for example, Hawisher, Hawisher and Selfe, and Cooper and Selfe for influential explanations of how networked computers inspired changes in writing pedagogy and definitions of critical literacy.

³ See, for example, Sullivan and Dautermann's collection, *Electronic Literacies in the Workplace*. Hocks, Grabill and Lopez outline an argument for epistemological and institutional connections between WAC and technical and professional communication.

⁴ See, for example, McLeod and Maimon, Thaiss, Walvoord, and Young on the central role of faculty development in transforming teaching.

⁵ See Royster for the history of Spelman's writing program and her experiences theorizing writing *praxis* during faculty development workshops. Spelman has a rich tradition of interdisciplinary interaction among faculty, as evidenced in programs like the Comparative Women's Studies Program, and the African Diaspora and the World core courses.

⁶ See Hocks and Bascelli for in-depth discussion of the Mellon Grant and the setup of this program.

⁷ Ellen Cushman's work, based on Lambert and Mullen's Digital Storytelling Project (www.storycenter.org), has students use video-based multimedia for service learning projects. Cushman provides an excellent example of how students can use these tools to create new media essays that combine visual images and critical analytical messages. The success of these video essays is demonstrated by the powerful enactment of student voices as they use multiple modes to compose stories and academic narratives, and such projects can thus advance the kinds of critical pedagogies using students' own languages as advocated by LeCourt and by the New London Group's approach to multiliteracies (see Cope and Kalantzis).

⁸ Nancy Kaplan and Randy Bass make powerful cases for how electronic archives impact how we know and understand English studies and literacies, as well as how others understand them.

⁹ Colleagues that guided our program and that presented workshops during these seminars include Kristine Blair, Chris Boese, Anne Kimball Loux, Richard and Cynthia Selfe, Kathleen Yancey, and Art Young.

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Shaping Consensus from Difference: Administering Writing Programs in Departments of Writing and English

Richard C. Raymond

In the fall of 1993, eleven MA English instructors and six tenured PhDs in English split from their Department of English at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR), forming the Department of Rhetoric and Writing. This split, a radical collaborative act, carried the enthusiastic endorsement of Barry Maid, the former Chair of English and the first Chair of Rhetoric and Writing. Though challenging the old order, the new department also carried the mandate of Provost Joel Anderson, without whom the separation never could have been effected. The provost risked forming the new department because he shared Maid's conviction that a writing department should support the mission of this urban university: studying language to help students grow academically, professionally, and ethically as agents of social change (Lovitt and Young 114). In pursuing that mission, the new department took responsibility for the university writing center and the composition program, as well as the BA and MA programs in technical and expository writing.

Consensus over departmental mission notwithstanding, dissensus in the English department created a climate for change. Those eleven instructors had been hired by the English department to teach first-year composition, a condition they all accepted on employment. Nevertheless, most of those instructors held traditional MAs in English and had taught introductory literature courses in high schools or two-year colleges; consequently, they felt qualified to teach sophomore courses in literature and junior-level courses in writing. Though all eleven instructors held full commitments to teaching composition, their contractual displacement from upper-level courses made most feel like second-class citizens

in the department of English, a feeling exacerbated by a move to deny instructors voting rights in the department on any issues not directly related to composition.

Given these political tensions and this vision for change, splitting seemed as inevitable as it was painful for all concerned. Pain came, of course, to those literature professors who were—and still are—devoted to technical writing; pain came to the writing faculty who had to forsake literature; pain came to faculty in both departments who had been close friends with the those now in a different department.

Over the years, some faculty have rebuilt those friendships, and the two departments have moved from mutual distrust to collaborative ventures, as I will discuss below. However, some English faculty—they have told me so—still consider “The Split” a mistake, particularly the moving of the BA and MA programs in writing to the new department, where MAs often teach junior-level courses, and non-tenure-track EdDs occasionally teach graduate courses, practices the department of English would not condone. In contrast, most Rhetoric and Writing faculty consider the split a liberation. This sense of freedom notwithstanding, these eight years (I have experienced the last six) have taken my department down roads with curricular potholes and political bumps, the consequences of professional displacement and of internal strife borne of a two-class system: tenure- and non-tenure-track.

Yet the new department, Rhetoric and Writing, has endured; indeed, as Faulknerians in the English department might agree, we have prevailed, moving in five years from a talent-heavy but politically tenuous department to the 1998 “Department of Excellence,” an award conferred by a national board of seven university presidents and chancellors. Our secret? In spite of our internal insecurities and distrust, we have grown strong through collaboration, a process defined and upheld—especially in the face of squabbles and setbacks—by writing program administrators, a title held here by the director of composition, the graduate coordinator, the director of the writing center, and the chair.

As the Kenneth Bruffee/John Trimbur debate reminded us nearly two decades ago, we must never silence dissent as we work toward consensus in shaping our curriculum and conducting our business. But how, precisely, does a writing department “live and work together with [. . .] differences” (Trimbur 448) without derailing the mission described above?

Though I presume to have no definitive answers, I know this: we earned that award by working together. I also know that we learned to work together—as equals—by *challenging the hierarchies that inform*

American academe. In this essay, I will describe collaborative work rooted in principles that have sustained not only the department of Rhetoric and Writing at UALR, but also the traditional department of Literature, Languages, and Philosophy at Armstrong Atlantic State University (AASU) in Savannah, Georgia, where I taught from 1983-95 before coming to UALR:

- Sharing responsibility for teaching the department's programs.
- Sharing the work of governance.
- Sharing responsibility for assessment and curricular revision.
- Embracing the tough questions.

Necessarily, I will offer local instances of collaboration—some from AASU, most from UALR—to explicate these principles. While these site-specific practices cannot guarantee success everywhere, I do contend that these broad principles, followed tenaciously, can help writing programs achieve coherence and authority within departments of English. These collaborative principles will also help writing departments prosper once they choose to secede from English.

Sharing the Teaching Across the Department's Programs

First, let's consider the barriers to collaborative work. That element of pain, alluded to above, seems nearly inescapable in shaping programs when we ponder the formidable obstacles to collaboration in many departments of English or writing. How eagerly, for example, will professors of literature serve on a composition committee charged with revising a first-year writing program to which they have already paid their dues, a program from which they long to escape to focus on other scholarly interests? Many traditional PhDs, of course, enjoy teaching writing, but their load may rarely include composition. Can such faculty focus earnestly on questions of composition pedagogy? What about the current traditionalists and the new hires in rhetoric serving together on such a committee? Given their disparate pedagogies, how will they overcome their mutual distrust?

How can non-tenure track and tenure-track faculty work as equals when the former—by university policy—may never receive promotions? At UALR, salaries as well as rankings reinforce our two-class system. Instructors do receive a one-time addition to base salary, \$3,000, after completing a doctoral degree, a distinction two have achieved, with three more soon to follow. But even this raise locks instructors

several thousands of dollars below the salary earned by junior assistant professors. Again, given these built-in inequalities, how will such faculty feel full citizenship in the department if the university devalues their teaching?

And what about part-time faculty? At UALR, adjuncts teach 65% of the composition sections. We invite these lecturers—several of whom hold PhDs—to all department meetings; we invite them to composition committee meetings and urge their attendance at the August composition workshop. Our efforts at inclusion notwithstanding, lecturers live—with their sub-professional salaries and their multiple teaching jobs—at the margins of our department. Will such faculty feel invested in the department's curriculum when the department seems unable to secure office space for them?

Given such tensions, as Joseph Harris has recently urged, department administrators must move from commitment to action if they expect collaboration to yield healthy growth in the department (64). Sometimes, such action, like good teaching and scholarship, must risk failure. In the late 1980s at AASU, I introduced programmatic collaboration in my two-year term as composition coordinator by disguising the first meeting as a party, a pot-luck supper from 5:00 to 7:00 on a Sunday evening. Yes, I knew some professors would boycott the meeting, some resisting the intrusion of business on the weekend, others resenting what they assumed would be my effort to hype the collaborative classroom and to condemn traditional lecturing. But many did come: tenured professors, non-tenure-track instructors, part-time instructors, even some undergraduate tutors who worked in the writing center where we met.

After we spent an hour filling our bellies with bean dip and nachos and seven varieties of tuna casserole, we shifted our random table-talk to a focused discussion of Linda Flower's "Detection, Diagnosis, and the Strategies of Revision," an article I had copied and billed as our centerpiece for discussion.

It worked. We all left the writing center that night refreshed by old-fashioned fellowship, having shared good food and better conversation with those to whom we rarely had time to speak. Just as important, we left having shared our frustrations, validated our teaching, and stolen lots of great ideas for motivating student writers to revise. Staging this fruitful talk gave me the same satisfaction as having reached an audience in print.

As composition coordinator at AASU, then later as acting department head, I continued these pot-luck meetings once each quarter. Attendance improved, for word spread: the talk focused honestly on

pedagogy, not on party lines, on ways of responding to student writing, ways of managing portfolios, ways of conferring without dominating students. We always grounded our discussions in theory and history, focusing on then-current pieces, such as Stephen Fishman's "Explicating Our Tacit Tradition: John Dewey and Composition Studies" and Robert Connors' "Teachers' Rhetorical Comments on Student Papers." But we always read and talked against the grain, challenging published authority, explaining where we could believe, where we had to doubt.

The Department of Rhetoric and Writing at UALR regularly enjoys such pedagogical talk, as the section on assessment will document. Here, I celebrate the programmatic sharing fostered by our conversations. Having split from the Department of English, we embrace all three of our writing programs and share in their teaching. For example, the director of our composition program teaches composition; he also teaches business writing to majors and to MA students. In addition, following Joseph Harris's recommendation (63), in the Fall 2000 semester five of our ten graduate faculty, including the chair, taught a section of Composition I. Also, all of our instructors—those hired by the English department to teach composition—teach junior-level writing courses each semester; they have also served as readers on MA committees. Additionally, three instructors holding doctorates have taught graduate courses. These multi-program teaching assignments keep all of us fully invested in all phases of our common mission. Each of us owns the department's work. Trudy Smoke recommends that WPAs teach in the programs they administer (92). We have taken her recommendation a step further: Each WPA—the director of composition, the graduate coordinator, the director of the writing center, the chair—teaches in all three of our programs.

Sharing Governance

One might think that such curricular sharing comes easily in a writing department now free of the literature-writing turf wars that plague so many English departments. But one would be wrong. All our graduate faculty, for instance, have endorsed my view that all faculty in Rhetoric and Writing should teach in the composition program; rarely, however, do graduate faculty list Composition I or II when I ask for their teaching preferences for coming semesters. Similarly, non-tenure-track instructors unanimously value the teaching of first-year writing courses; with equal unanimity, however, instructors request upper-division courses as well as composition courses. Indeed, some have complained to me privately when they perceive that other instructors teach upper-division courses more frequently than they do. Behind my closed door, graduate

faculty have also expressed concern that an instructor may not have credentials to teach an upper-level course. Inevitably, too, in the same private venue instructors have complained of the arrogance of graduate faculty who presume to judge their competence.

Given such tensions between and among our “classes” of faculty, we would have strangled on our own grapevine long ago were it not for our shared governance. Our governance document, approved by the entire faculty, mandates shared responsibility for our administrative and curricular work. In so doing, our governance revises, so far as possible, the hierarchies mandated by the university and helps us to find unity in our differences.

For example, the governance committee itself consists of three tenure-track faculty and three non-tenure-track faculty. In contrast, in the English department, these same instructors had no vote, except on issues relating to composition. Undercutting the old hierarchy, our governance has given instructors an equal voice in shaping not only our mission statement and our rules and procedures, but also our criteria for merit raises, for tenure, and for promotion. Ironically, as noted above, the university governance bars instructors from promotion to professorial ranks, regardless of earned doctorates. Though our department cannot change such university policies, we have signaled their inequity by empowering instructors to share in forming all policy, including criteria for post-tenure review. Illustrating the power of this collaborative model, this year we readily passed our revised governance document, the members of that committee having spent two years Boyerizing the document and submitting it to faculty for review and comment. This achievement grew, then, from what Katherine L. Keller has called the “decentering of authority” (43).

This principle of shared responsibility informs all our committee work. The administrative committee, for example, includes everyone who holds an administrative position: the department chair, the graduate coordinator, the director of composition, and the director of the writing center; it also includes an elected at-large member. Elements of the traditional academic hierarchy manifest themselves in our restricting the chair position, except “under extraordinary conditions,” to tenured faculty, and in our requiring the graduate coordinator to be a member of the graduate faculty. These restrictions seem sensible to us, given the vulnerability of those whose contracts require them to take final responsibility for personnel decisions. However, no such restrictions apply to the director positions or to the at-large position. For the last six years, non-tenure-track instructors have held these three positions. With equal votes on all budgetary issues that come before that committee,

members make recommendations to the faculty; the faculty, in turn, makes policy. As Lynn Meeks and Christine Hult might put it, we work as “co-mentoring” WPAs (9).

Showing the same balance in structure, our annual review committee consists of three instructors and three tenure-track faculty, with the department chair serving as convener and facilitator. Each year, the membership of the committee changes, not only to share the work but to prevent accumulations of power on this politically sensitive committee, whose members read annual professional activity reports submitted by all faculty, then advise the chair on merit rankings. The chair then writes annual review letters to each faculty member, stating the ranking, describing strengths, and suggesting areas for improvement. While the chair may not agree with the committee’s ranking—no merit, merit, merit plus, exceptional merit—the chair must report the committee’s views as well as his or her own, especially if disagreement exists. Faculty then meet individually with the chair to discuss the letter, which then goes to the dean. Because these letters determine raises for each year and help to build the paper trail toward tenure and promotion, faculty have the right to protest in writing any perceived injustice in the ranking. To date, none has seen the need for such protest. Our harmony grows not from my Solomon-like wisdom but rather from the fairness ensured by our shared governance.

Our sharing of responsibility and authority also manifests itself on two committees that exclude non-tenure-track instructors. Reflecting the traditional hierarchy, the graduate committee consists of tenure-track faculty hired to teach primarily graduate courses. Making procedural and curricular decisions concerning the MA program, this committee also chooses the graduate coordinator. Even more exclusive, the promotion and tenure committee consists of tenured faculty; they read the portfolios of those seeking tenure or promotion, then make recommendations to the chair. However, the work of the graduate committee—new course proposals, selection of the graduate coordinator, policy changes—must be sanctioned by the entire faculty. In like manner, without the supporting vote of the entire faculty, no recommendation for tenure or promotion can move from the promotion and tenure committee and the chair to our dean. Once again, then, our governance has challenged the hierarchy, giving voice to instructors in choosing our leaders and in developing our curriculum.

Sharing Responsibility for Assessment and Curricular Revision

As citizens of the Department of Rhetoric and Writing, we also speak with equal voices in developing and revising our curricula, a right we earn by embracing the assessment of all our programs. The following faculty groups conduct our ongoing assessment activities:

- The senior portfolio committee rates BA portfolios, conducts exit interviews, and administers exit surveys. Members also analyze and interpret data from these assessment activities, thereby assisting the department chair (also a member of this committee), who must write the annual assessment progress report submitted to the dean each spring.
- The undergraduate studies committee reviews the BA assessment progress report and recommends curricular changes supported by data from our assessment process.
- The graduate committee does likewise with the MA assessment progress report, written by the graduate coordinator.
- Focus groups serve as subcommittees to the undergraduate studies committee and the graduate committee. Using recent theory as well as results from our assessment activities, such as the department's retreat, members propose new courses and revise course descriptions to help us meet the needs of our students.
- The composition committee addresses the needs of adjuncts and teaching assistants. This group has also designed and implemented a portfolio approach to assessing our first-year composition program.

With the exception of the graduate committee, as explained earlier, instructors and tenure-track faculty do the work of all these committees and groups. As James F. Slevin would likely agree, our faculty deserves praise for taking "ownership" of our writing programs (301). Such ownership grows from their "sense of responsibility not only for the teaching of writing but for the continuing study and review of its quality," Slevin's definition of intellectual work (299).

Such intellectual work can renew a department, as the AASU examples above suggest. At UALR, this shared curricular work has also generated exciting programmatic change, a claim not often made for committee work. In November of 1998, for example, having secured

500 curricular-development dollars from our generous dean, I led our department on a day-long retreat at a lake-side conference center. That kind of money secured us morning coffee and donuts, a full lunch, and afternoon cookies and Coke—enough to keep us talking from 8:00 AM until 5:00 PM. But our talk remained focused; we had done our homework.

Two weeks before the retreat, we had a two-hour meeting focusing on the work of the 1997-98 senior exit portfolio committee and the assessment progress report from the previous spring. That discussion generated a question that we would explore fully at the retreat: how could we realign our major in professional and technical writing to give students more experience in editing and technical communication?

Before we tackled this question at the retreat, our director of the writing center, the director of composition, and the graduate coordinator reviewed our departmental mission. We also discussed the theoretical assumptions underlying our mission.

After lunch, we divided into our focus groups—technical communication, expository writing, and persuasive writing—to explore better ways of aligning our curriculum and our praxis with our mission and our theories. We then reconvened as a faculty and shared the results of each focus group.

Following that day of retreat, one marked by a depth of fellowship impossible to achieve at a typical one-hour committee meeting on campus, we began the process of crafting curricular change. Naturally, plenty of conflicts arose in the process. For example, when the undergraduate studies committee recommended including our editing course among required courses in the major, some voices challenged the proposal, noting the possibility of driving off majors with our expanded core. But the recommendation passed unanimously, not because the protesters were silenced, but rather because committee members came prepared to stress the importance of the editing course and the integrity of the core.

Such discussions before, during, and after the retreat led to significant revisions in our BA program—all sanctioned by three years of data generated by our assessment processes:

- A required junior-level course in editing
- A new course in theories of rhetoric and writing
- A division of our course in technical writing, one focusing on “workplace writing” for our majors as well as majors in manage-

ment and nursing, another focusing on technical communication in systems engineering and information technology.

Though the university approved these changes in 1999, we have of course continued gathering assessment data and processing that data through our committee structure. To encourage faculty to continue the process of folding the data into discussions of our curriculum and staffing, in the fall of 2000 I broached the idea of a second retreat, outlining its two-day structure, and suggesting points of focus. Specifically, I asked our director of composition and the composition committee to consider addressing one of these issues central to our programmatic growth:

- Progress on the portfolio assessment program
- Conditions for lecturers in our department
- Outcomes and objectives
- Expanding full-time faculty
- Training for teaching assistants

Similarly, I asked the director of the writing center, the chair of the undergraduate studies committee, and the graduate coordinator to meet with their committees to select a theoretical, pedagogical, or curricular issue that most concerns them and the achievement of our shared mission. Significantly, the faculty *owned* this retreat, determining the issues we explored and the readings we completed to prepare for each day, one devoted to the composition program and the writing center, the other to the degree programs.

Specifically, on September 29, the first day of the retreat, the director of composition and his composition committee discussed their progress in implementing an assessment plan for the first-year writing program. Our plan now centers on portfolios and on the work of the “WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition” (59-70), a piece that Huey Crisp, our director of composition, had asked us all to read. More a workshop than a lecture, the session engaged us in testing our rubric for portfolio assessment. That same day, our writing center director, Allison Holland, reviewed the history of the writing center and the dual challenges of maintaining computers and training majors in the procedures and ethics of one-on-one teaching.

Then on October 27, the second day of the retreat, we spent the morning reviewing our work on developing a capstone course,

expanding our service learning offerings, and revising the technical communication track in our major. That afternoon, the graduate coordinator, Julia Ferganchick, and her graduate committee put us to work reading MA portfolios to test our new rubric for that program.

In the semester since this second retreat, we have pursued these follow-up activities:

- Implementing a portfolio program for assessing our first-year composition program
- Writing a proposal for a capstone course
- Planning a certificate program and a new degree program in technical communication.

At UALR, then, we collaborate as teachers, theorists, and governors, thereby meeting what Patricia Meyer Spacks calls our “collective responsibility” for the functioning of our department (95). In doing so, we enjoy the sense of community that Barbara Walvoord says provides the “backbone” for any strong writing program (63). Over time, such talk identifies programmatic strengths as well as problems; such talk, that is, begins the assessment process, without which no writing program can grow with students’ needs. Such talk also persuades participants of their “efficacy” as teachers, providing the “helpful feedback on how we are doing” that Susan McLeod identifies as crucial to improving teachers as well as programs (380).

Embracing the Tough Questions

Such discussion, of course, also increases tension. When department leaders call meetings to effect change in pedagogy, governance, or curriculum, those who refuse to come and those who come in full battle dress, ear plugs included, never cease resenting discussion that seems to threaten their autonomy. Yet we must never let fear of tension derail such discussions, for, as Patricia Meyer Spacks has written, our programs can prosper only if we “get factions to work together” (95). “It’s possible,” Spacks continues, for leaders “to demand that faculty members seek and discover what they hold in common—and what they can learn from one another. It’s possible to focus attention on the work we need to do as teachers and how best to do it” (95).

But how can we “demand” collaboration? We know that stirring creative tension can yield curricular changes that justify the risk. However, we also know that bad timing and autocratic tones can stifle creativity. For instance, when I came to UALR as chair in 1995, I

foolishly demanded that the faculty address—immediately—a tough question: “Is our Comp program serving our students well?” The question seemed warranted by the countless comments I had heard in my first several weeks on campus—comments coming from faculty in other departments: “What are you people in Rhetoric doing?” “My students’ writing is appalling.” “Can’t you get your faculty to uphold college standards?” Of course, I dismissed the more militant remarks of those who equate ‘good grammar’ with learning and who prefer whining to accepting responsibility for writing across the curriculum. Nevertheless, I thought it reasonable to ask the faculty to show their accountability by assessing the “rigor” of our composition program. Naturally, they found my diction offensive, an indictment of their unprofessional standards. Just as predictably, I received cold stares instead of cooperation.

Realizing my error, I dropped “rigor” from my vocabulary and demanded nothing—except that all committees review our mission statement, then begin to phrase *their own* tough questions on pedagogy, governance, and curriculum (Kinkead and Simpson 72). The results of this shift in strategy can be found in the narrative above—and in our receiving that Department of Excellence Award, which brought us a handsome plaque, campus-wide respect, and \$35,000.

I will close by describing one more tough question that the Department of Rhetoric and Writing has embraced: how can we mend our relationship with our colleagues in the Department of English and enrich the curriculum for majors in both departments? Once again, we have begun to find an answer in collaboration. In 1999, I worked with two English professors in writing a new degree plan: a major in English literature for students who want to teach English in high schools. With a sense of common ground that surprised and pleased all three of us, we wrote a program that includes an undiluted literature major, the obligatory education minor, and two upper-division courses offered by my department. The first, expository writing, ensures that these English majors learn to write nonfiction, not just literary analysis. The second, teaching literature and writing in high schools,” prepares English majors to walk into their first classrooms with solid pedagogical strategies for teaching literature and writing. In the fall of 2000, English and Rhetoric majors enrolled for the first time in this new course. On the first day, these students were greeted by Paul Yoder, a professor of English, and by me, a professor of Rhetoric. We team-taught the course. In doing so, we taught our students and ourselves that collaboration draws creative energy from difference.

I remain committed to collaboration as the principle that governs departments of writing and departments of English, knowing that autocratic leadership can alienate faculty and retard the evolution of a coherent writing curriculum. More to the point, I remain committed to the collaborative principle because I have seen the often painful but always healthy growth it generates in writing programs. As Donald Bushman recently urged, writing program leaders must claim “opportunities for reflection” for themselves and for faculty so that, together, they can take purposeful “action” in shaping their department and the curriculum (36). In pursuing such collaborative work, we join Tom Recchio in eschewing the “masterful” stance as administrator; instead, we live our administrative work as “relational and receptive” (160)—the same way we try to live as scholars and teachers of writing.

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How Useful are Handbooks for Second Language Writers?

Jessica Williams and Jacqueline Evans

It is a widely accepted assumption that writers and their teachers should focus first, and above all, on the communication of meaning, and that any focus on formal aspects of language, while important, comes second, both in significance and, often, chronologically in the writing process.¹ Most teachers of second language writing would share this assumption, as do we. However, the continuing sentence-level problems that so many English as a Second Language (ESL) writers demonstrate—even while the content and organization of their writing may meet expectations—have caused many writing teachers with ESL writers in their classes to turn to handbooks for help. That help has not always been forthcoming, and results, in terms of positive change in the writing of their students, have not always been evident. With so many ESL writers coming to two- and four-year colleges and universities, it seems a good time to examine and analyze these handbooks in an effort to determine how they might best be used to help ESL writers toward higher levels of accuracy.

We began this endeavor several years ago when the composition office decided to select a single handbook for the program. One of the authors (Williams) was asked to review about a dozen handbooks and recommend one from an ESL perspective. As linguists and ESL professionals, we have often been asked to help address the needs and challenges of the growing group of ESL writers in our composition classes. As at many similar institutions, our composition staff has neither the resources nor the expertise to focus on these needs. Unfortunately, the composition literature offers little guidance as to the use of handbooks with ESL writers. Indeed, an informed perspective on second language writing research is mostly lacking in composition studies (Matsuda, “Situating”; Silva, Leki, and Carson). Instead, the field of second language writing tends to draw more directly on

linguistics, often through its connection to TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language). Paul Kei Matsuda points to the “disciplinary division of labor” between the two fields, with different research and pedagogical approaches, contrasting professional preparation, and even different journals (“Composition” 699). We hope that a perspective from outside the field will provide some fresh insight into the issue of handbook use.

In this article, we try to address some basic questions of handbook use: Insofar as second language issues are concerned, what positive role(s) can handbooks play? Whom can they help and how? What are their limitations? We hope to provide some guidance to writing program administrators, especially those responsible for preparing instructors and teaching assistants, and to all composition teachers who have ESL writers in their classes. We will focus on which features and tasks are most likely to be helpful and effective tools in promoting competent second language writing, and suggest ways to improve current handbook activities and use. We will primarily examine sentence-level accuracy because this is the problem for which most teachers advise ESL writers in their classes to consult handbooks, or for which the teachers themselves most often turn to handbooks for assistance.² We believe that handbooks could be improved with the inclusion of activities such as contextualized exercises and the development of self-editing strategies. We also contend that teachers can benefit from a greater understanding of second language learning and that this knowledge can temper their expectations regarding the utility of handbooks.

Handbooks are curious beasts, and they seem to get curiouser and curiouser with each edition. They began as reference books to be consulted on questions of grammar and style. Gradually they have come to address other topics, from the writing process, to citation conventions, to research strategies. They also serve other purposes, from informing teachers of new research and practices, to helping students use internet resources and to write effectively in their own disciplines (Broadbent; Connors, “Handbooks,” “Mechanical”; Hawhee). Every handbook stresses the singular importance of knowing one’s audience and understanding the purpose of a piece of writing. Yet, handbooks themselves have been pulled in many directions to serve a variety of audiences. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the recent inclusion of material to assist ESL writers.

Though they have also been described as the teachers of teachers (Hawhee 514), handbooks are ostensibly for students and other writers who want to improve their writing. However, in many cases, the audience for the ESL sections, notes, and alerts in the latest editions

of standard handbooks seems more clearly to be the instructors, who may suddenly be confronted with a significant number of ESL writers in their classes. These instructors may be bewildered by the writing of these students, resulting in a variety of responses, ranging from anger that the students' problems have not been "taken care of" in earlier ESL classes, to benign neglect with the accompanying attitude that ESL writers' unique problems will disappear on their own, to a knee-jerk focus on grammar and a tendency to refer ESL writers to metalinguistic explanations and mechanical drills. Thus, it seems that the ESL portions of handbooks have two different purposes: to assist ESL writers in improving accuracy in their own writing and to inform writing teachers about the challenges faced by ESL writers. Because the needs of the two groups are quite different, the effectiveness of handbooks in addressing these two audiences has to be evaluated separately.

We begin with the teacher audience, especially those whose knowledge of second language issues is limited. In order for teachers to help their students improve their sentence-level accuracy, it is important for the teachers to understand grammatical systems at a metalinguistic level. Obviously, they have intuitive knowledge of grammar, but if a student asks, for instance, why the present perfect rather than the simple past is the more appropriate tense choice, teachers cannot simply reply that one tense "sounds better." Such intuition is one of the defining characteristics of a native speaker and most ESL writers cannot make or profit from such judgments. Therefore, teachers have to be ready with a brief and clear explanation of why one form rather than another should be used. Yet, how many composition teachers have at their fingertips explanations for, say, the distribution of definite and indefinite articles? Many are probably not even aware of the difference between count and non-count nouns. And indeed, why should they be? It is not an issue that comes up with native speakers. This then, is one useful function of the ESL material in handbooks: it can help formalize teachers' intuitive knowledge of grammar, especially in areas that are problematic specifically for ESL writers.

If the ESL material in handbooks is potentially helpful for teachers, what sort of presentation works best? Handbooks generally take one of three approaches: (1) a separate ESL section (for example, Hairston, Ruskiewicz and Friend;³ Kirschner and Mandell; Rosen and Behrens); (2) scattered notes and alerts that are integrated with the rest of the text and are signaled with some symbol (for example, Anson and Schwengler; Fowler and Aaron); and (3) a combination of the two, usually with cross-referencing (for example, Hult and Huckin; Lunsford and Connors; Troyka). There are political overtones to choosing either approach.

Particularly, if one assumes the major audience for the handbook is the student, some would argue that setting aside a separate section for ESL writers is alienating, an example of *othering*. Another argument against a separate section for ESL writers is the tremendous overlap in the challenges faced by ESL writers and novice native English writers. It makes little sense to cover the same material twice in two separate sections. We believe that the combined approach is the most valuable for teachers because it addresses their needs on two fronts. Scattered flags and notes within a section that is directed at native English writers can alert teachers to potential ESL problems that may not have occurred to them and refer them to more extensive treatment in the ESL section. On the other hand, if teachers simply want to inform themselves of ESL issues in general, the separate section can provide a valuable orientation, a goal that would be difficult to accomplish with only intermittent ESL references.

Many handbooks have also begun to address how differences in cultural and educational background may affect the writing process and product. Ilona Leki argues that many presentations on contrastive rhetoric, the term often used to refer to these differences, tend to be reductionist, in that all learners of a cultural or linguistic background may then automatically be assumed to write, or even think, in a certain way. This becomes particularly insidious when extensive research in this area is captured in simplistic statements, such as, Chinese writers value digression in their essays (for example, Kirschner and Mandell A15). Although we wholeheartedly agree with Leki's cautions (237-40), it remains important that teachers be aware of the influence that ESL students' cultural and educational backgrounds may have on their writing.

Finally, handbooks can provide guidance for teachers by describing and explaining learners' errors (Raimes, "Errors"). Many composition instructors are baffled by ESL errors in writing, even if they have a full understanding of the grammar. Why on earth do learners write sentences such as these?

This poem I think we can learn a lot.

The reason that they don't have sanitary condition.

In some cases, we may gain insight from the first languages of these writers. Some handbooks provide examples of errors that are typical of writers from specific language backgrounds as well as some explanation for why these writers produce such errors (for example, Anson and Schwengler; Lunsford and Connors). For instance, the first sentence may

be a reflection of one word-order pattern typical in Chinese, in which the general topic of the sentence is stated first.

This poem I think we can learn a lot.

Topic Comment

I think we can learn a lot from this poem.

For the second example, teachers might assume that it is a fragment consisting of a head noun followed by a relative clause and, as a result, they may attempt to complete the sentence: *The reason that they don't have sanitary condition is . . .* In fact, it is more likely that this sentence is simply an example of omission of the copula, (the verb, *to be*), an option or requirement in many languages.

The reason IS that they don't have sanitary condition(s).

However, it is important to stress that learner-error profiles cannot be reduced to a simple contrastive analysis between the writer's first language and English. There are many other factors that come into play: the learner's readiness to acquire a structure; the processing load involved in managing content, organization, and sentence-level accuracy; and the complexity of the grammatical system in which the error occurs. Finally, it is important to make note of those daunting sentences produced by ESL writers that cannot be captured with a simple explanation and that no handbook on earth can untangle:

Family is the most basic of all situation material relationship and closely put together with effects of individual of both families marriage that last through generation.

This may be an extreme example, but it is one familiar to many ESL writing teachers. This writer is reaching for academic writing without the linguistic proficiency that it requires. Simply discovering this writer's intentions will probably require a face-to-face conference; helping her toward target-like accuracy will take much more, far more than any handbook can offer. Learners like this are simply not ready to use a handbook and asking them to do so is futile. In short, some of these problems are not easily addressed or accommodated by a handbook, but including examples of typical ESL errors can be helpful in reassuring teachers that the kinds of errors that ESL writers make in their classes are indeed frequent, to be expected, and not anyone's fault.

In the end, however, the primary audience for handbooks is students. Unfortunately, we have often observed teachers simply direct-

ing ESL writers with problems to pertinent sections of the handbook, hoping that learners can understand and use the explanations that they offer. How useful to ESL writers is the material in handbooks? We will argue that, depending on how the material is used, its utility may be limited. What material does a handbook contain that might be helpful to an ESL writer? Obviously, all of them contain a compendium of grammatical rules. The breadth and quality of the rule coverage in handbooks vary considerably. Some go into grammatical explanations in excruciating detail; others offer rules of thumb that are targeted at writers who are less familiar with metalinguistic vocabulary. Some try to cover every grammatical category that an ESL writer might need; others simply try to pick a few that are the most common. It is difficult to compare and evaluate the grammatical coverage in handbooks because it is impossible to know who will be using them: an explanation that might result in one learner's glazed confusion could well be just right for another learner. Learners' developmental readiness has everything to do with whether or not they can and will take advantage of the opportunities for learning that are offered to them. ESL grammar textbook writers attempt to exploit learners' developmental readiness for instruction by making idealized (and usually unwarranted) assumptions about the uniformity of the language proficiency of their target population. They simply assume that what is contained in their textbook is the next developmental step for these learners. Handbook writers and editors—because their ESL target audience is so diverse in terms of needs, goals, and proficiency levels—cannot make any such assumption.

For this reason, we turn to what we think is the more crucial issue in comparing and evaluating handbooks, that is, the activities that they offer for learning and using the grammar they present. For the purpose of this review, we have chosen to examine only student handbooks, exclusive of any ancillaries that may be available. We do realize that many handbooks have instructors' editions that may address second language writing in greater depth and that some even have separate texts and workbooks that focus exclusively on ESL issues. In a few cases, the kind of treatment we are recommending is, in fact, available in the ancillary materials. Some of these, particularly interactive CDs and web-based materials, offer great promise, with their ability to individualize and make problematic material salient. However, in evaluating only the student handbook, we sought to focus on the material to which a majority of students and their teachers are likely to have access.

Both in the presentation of rules and conventions,⁴ and in subsequent activities, most handbooks limit themselves to the sentence level. They generally provide (1) rules, e.g., “Only the gerund form can follow a preposition”; and (2) examples of correct and incorrect usage, e.g., “He thought about go to his friend’s house” and “He thought about going to his friend’s house.” Both of these may come in the form of “alerts” in which common ESL problems are flagged. Finally, handbooks may contain (3) exercises in which learners are to practice using the knowledge they have gained from the rule provision portion of the material. These may take a traditional form, such as a slot-and-filler drill, e.g., “(The, A, Ø) newest technology allows us to send (the, a, ø) picture over (the, a, ø) internet instantly” (for example, Rosen and Behrens), or an editing exercise, e.g., “Many ESL students avoid to do their assignments until the last minute. This is something that they cannot afford doing” (for example, Anson and Schwegler). A few handbooks include somewhat more open-ended tasks that are designed to increase learners’ practice of new forms, e.g., *Write a two-page story using at least five two-part verbs* (for example, Hult and Huckin). Only rarely do handbooks provide any extended practice, such as in multi-paragraph writing or editing, and still more rarely, any practice situated within the context of the students’ own writing.

Second language material in handbooks is likely to be consulted at two junctures: when introducing some structure or convention and at the point of error, which is probably more frequently the case. The question then becomes, do the three types of material—rules, examples, and decontextualized exercises—help learners to become better writers, either as a result of exposure to novel grammatical input or of error correction? The answer is not clear cut, but there is a fair amount of evidence from second language acquisition research suggesting that often they do not, but under the right conditions, with the right material, it is possible.

To begin, of the three types of material, rule provision tends to be the longest and most frequent in most handbooks. Even if we assume that being shown or told a rule leads to knowledge of the rule, there is ample evidence that rule knowledge is no guarantee of correct rule application (see Alderson et al.; Green and Hecht; Hulstijn and Hulstijn). Thus, in general, the bulk of what is presented in handbooks, when they are used as a self-access reference, may be ineffective in increasing learners’ accuracy in writing. There are some occasions when learners may find a handbook helpful as a reference tool. This is particularly likely if learners are aware that there is a gap in their knowledge of English. Merrill Swain and Sharon Lapkin have demonstrated that when learners

become aware of such gaps, they often take positive steps to fill them (373). However, this scenario assumes that the learner is aware of the gap, that the problem is easily corrigible, and that the information is easily accessible in the handbook. We suspect that most grammatical difficulties encountered by ESL writers do not approach this ideal.

What of error correction more generally? If a grammatical error is pointed out to a learner, with a symbol or other flag, with reference to some explanation or examples in a handbook, would that be helpful? Unfortunately, here too, there is a long list of studies of second language writing that suggests feedback on error and additional grammar and editing instruction, as commonly practiced, do not significantly affect subsequent linguistic accuracy (Polio, Fleck, and Leder; and Truscott). In spite of the lack of empirical support for grammar instruction and error correction in the writing classroom, the practice remains widespread. However, as Charlene Polio, Catherine Fleck and Nevin Leder point out, “these studies should not be taken as evidence that grammar correction is theoretically ineffective; rather, these studies merely show that grammar correction *as practiced* is ineffective” (60, emphasis added). In their study, the practice was typical of what is found in ESL sections of handbooks, namely, grammar review and editing exercises.

Some argue that it is simply a matter of finding the right way to go about integrating grammar instruction and feedback into the writing process (Byrd and Reid; Ferris and Hedgcock; Ferris, “Case”). In “Teaching Students to Self-Edit,” Dana Ferris suggests one approach, in which learners learn to self-edit. She has yet to publish empirical support for this technique, but it has considerable face validity for two reasons: First, it is a *process* that must be learned and practiced, not a set of rules to be memorized, a perspective that has support outside of the field of second language writing in Constance Weaver’s *Teaching Grammar in Context*, for example. Ferris’s approach to teaching editing skills is far more involved and time-consuming than referring learners to a page in a handbook. Second, it is practiced in the context of the students’ own writing, something that handbook-use cannot easily accommodate. A similar approach is advocated by Jane Cogie, Kim Strain and Sharon Lorinskas, for use with ESL writers in writing centers, where learners receive one-on-one tutoring help (21-23). They, too, advocate a process of increasing error awareness and identification, followed by self-editing, but above all, transferring as much responsibility as possible to the learner. However, they also stress that this is not an overnight transformation; it is a process that takes time and, often, collaborative effort. Finally, an important feature of these approaches

is that they are immediate, taking place while the writer's attention is on expressing meaning. The approaches are an integrated part of the writing process, not dislocated feedback or exercises separated from the writing process in both time and intention.

Given the complexity of teaching both writing skills and assisting ESL writers in their development towards target-like linguistic accuracy, what sorts of tasks could bolster the role that handbooks play in this process? In order to make such a determination, it is important to distinguish among the types of rules that contribute to linguistic accuracy. Teachers need to understand the type of structure or error they are trying to change if their intervention is to be effective. With the full knowledge that we are simplifying this issue, we will distinguish among three types of rules and the errors that learners often make in trying to follow them.

First, there are many rules that learners may "know." Recurrent errors in the use of these rules are particularly frustrating to teachers. What we mean by "know" is that learners have either partial or complete knowledge of how the grammatical subsystem works, yet they seem not to have adequate control over their knowledge and continue to make errors. Ellen Bialystok and Michael Sharwood Smith have distinguished between linguistic knowledge, or competence, and control of that knowledge (101). They claim that it is varying control over knowledge that can explain why a learner's performance is inconsistent. Much of the work that is done on ESL grammar in writing classrooms is in an effort to increase learner control over their developing knowledge of target grammatical rules. Thus, the two crucial features of this rule type is that learners already have at least partial understanding of it and that knowledge of how one form works can be extended to related forms; in short, that it is part of a grammatical system.

Examples of this first type of rule include agreement, participial adjectives (e.g., *interested* vs. *interesting*), and many rules for verb tense choice. For example, if an ESL writer is having trouble with tense, the teacher first needs to identify the type of problem. It might be tense switching, misunderstanding the application of a tense (e.g., what context is appropriate for the use of present perfect) or simply failing to mark tense at all (e.g., "The scientist conclude that the experiment fail for two reasons."). The contrastive analysis provided in some handbooks can offer a place for teachers to start, but more importantly, they must also look for patterns in each student's writing. Furthermore, although all of these errors relate to tense, they are not the same. For example, it is likely that consistent failure to mark tense is a control problem; this means that ESL writers can quickly correct these errors if their attention

is drawn to them. However, a learner may simply not understand all the nuances of say, progressive aspect. This is an issue of the development of linguistic knowledge rather than increasing control over structures that have already been acquired.

Once the problem has been identified as a control problem, then the teacher can begin to deal directly with the student. Some grammatical explanation may be called for, but the metalanguage in most handbooks may compound the problem rather than alleviate it. The teacher may need to interpret the information in the handbook for the student. Following a grammatical explanation, many handbooks provide sentence-level drills. We cannot emphasize enough the ineffectiveness of these drills. As ESL teachers know and many composition teachers quickly discover, ESL writers are often experts at the sentence level drill but this has no apparent effect on their writing. The same observation has been made for writers in their first language (Hartwell).

Despite these problems, handbooks can improve their effectiveness in increasing learner control over rules they know. This can be accomplished with the greater use of two kinds of activities: contextualized exercises and error correction strategies. Contextualized exercises are multi-paragraph essays filled with a specific error, such as a verb tense problem, that students can find and correct. Some handbooks do contain editing exercises, but rarely are they longer than a paragraph. Longer passages that require students to think about how one sentence affects another are feasible in handbooks. If ESL writers first work their way through such an essay, finding and correcting the errors, and then discuss the reasoning for their corrections with their teacher or classmates, it may be that they can then work more successfully on finding and correcting the same type of error in their own work. Applying what they know to their own work is a crucial step that bridges the gap between handbook exercises and writing accurately. This task may be beyond the bounds of the handbook itself, but the handbook can lay the groundwork for it.

The second important component of this process of finding and correcting errors is the development of error correction strategies. In order for ESL writers to have success at editing their own work, they cannot simply be given an exercise like the one above and be told to correct it. Rather, they must have a clear way to identify errors and apply rules to the essay, and ultimately, their own writing. For each grammar problem, a strategy to find and correct errors is crucial. Handbooks seem by their nature to lend themselves to this element of grammar instruction. Before students work on the contextualized exercises or their own work, they must have a method to approach each problem.

Teachers may think of them as activities students can do independently, but if students are to use this process, initially, it must be guided and modeled by the teacher.

Error correction strategies work best when they can be applied first to a contextualized exercise and then to students' own writing. It is important to note here that the following strategies assume some knowledge on the part of the students. For example, to find tense errors, a learner needs to be able to identify finite verbs. This is no simple task, and some students may need preparation before they are able to complete an exercise like this one. The crucial element of a successful error correction strategy is that it must provide writers with a point of entry to the text. They must begin the process with something they *can* do and then move systematically from there to what they need to find and change. Not every exercise will work for every student but if the learners are ready, this process can be effective.

An error correction strategy can consist of a relatively simple list of steps which could easily follow the grammatical explanations and examples already present in handbooks. To work on tense shifting on unmarked verbs, the steps would be quite basic:

1. Underline all the finite verbs.
2. For each verb:
a. Does the action or event that is described take place in the present or the past?
 - a. If the action or event is in the present, is there a present tense verb? If the tense is incorrect, change it to present.
 - b. If the action or event is in the past, is there a past tense verb? If the tense is incorrect, change it to past.

The point of entry in this case is the identification of finite verbs. When learners locate the verb, they have also located the point of potential error and can proceed to use the guidelines provided. This process may seem mechanical to teachers, who are often more comfortable with writing as a creative process and respond to grammatical questions intuitively. The problem is that ESL writers may not have the same intuitions; their grammatical processing is not automatic even though, at some level, they "know" the grammar point in question. The level of accuracy demanded in college courses may require that they use a slower and more mechanical method of reducing errors of this type. These steps can help ESL writers bridge the gap between learning the rule and applying it in their own writing.

A second area of difficulty is one in which handbooks may have a more limited role. There are many aspects of language that are seen as grammatical rules, yet they more closely resemble the lexicon in the manner in which they are learned. They are not particularly systematic and, in lay terms, they simply have to be memorized. In contrast to the first type of rule, which involves *system learning*, this type of rule involves *item learning*, or learning one item at a time.

One example that comes to mind quickly is prepositions. Why do we live *on* a street but *at* an address? There is no particular reason. Handbooks make a useful reference book for these kinds of rules. Or if, for instance, learners know that a certain verb must be followed by either a gerund or infinitive, but they don't know which, most handbooks have accessible charts, lists and tables to consult. Contextualized exercises may not be feasible for these because the forms do not occur with enough frequency in natural writing to allow for one of effective length. However, error correction strategies may still be useful. And, although we stand by our assertion that error correction strategies work best when used first with contextualized exercises and then students' writing, they still have benefits when used with these rules that require item learning. In conjunction with the charts, lists, and tables that handbooks already provide, error correction strategies help draw ESL writers' attention to a difficult structure, aid memorization, and develop the practice of looking up answers when they are unsure of their choice. For instance, the choice of a gerund or infinitive following a finite verb lends itself to a simple error correction strategy that ESL writers can use to check their own writing. As in the earlier example of verb tense, the entry point is the ability to identify finite verbs, as well as, in this case, the ability to identify auxiliary and modal verbs.

1. Check every sentence. In each one, are there two or more verbs together? If so, continue to Step 2.
2. Is the first sentence in the group an auxiliary or modal verb? If it is **not** an auxiliary or modal verb, continue to Step 3.
3. Underline the first verb and check your handbook or learner dictionary to see whether it should be followed by a gerund or infinitive. Make sure you have used the correct form.

Other rules in this group, such as for preposition use, are less likely candidates even for error correction strategies. Handbooks do generally break preposition usage down into manageable chunks, such as prepositions of time (*at* 3:30 p.m.) or place (*on* Clark Street, *at* home,

in school). They may even provide lists of prepositions that commonly occur with specific nouns, verbs and adjectives. The fact is, however, that because there are so many possibilities in natural language for prepositional use, there is no clear entry point that ESL writers can use to locate potential errors. Unlike the earlier examples of verb tense or gerunds and infinitives, simple error correction strategies that would apply to ESL writing are virtually impossible to create. Although the examples and lists of prepositions in handbooks may be of some use as a reference for more advanced ESL writers, learner dictionaries may be a more logical choice. The contexts for preposition choice that tend to be most difficult for ESL writers are those that are dictated by the noun, verb or adjective preceding it. ESL writers can look up those words in a learner dictionary and see which prepositions follow them and in what context. This is a more efficient method than checking through lists or charts in handbooks.

Increasing learner control over knowledge, as in our first example, and providing a reference to aid item learning, as in our second example, are very different goals from trying to actually change learner knowledge through system learning. This is a far more difficult and time-consuming endeavor. Second language acquisition, that is, the development of new and systematic knowledge, takes time, lots of time. As we have stated, simply providing the learners with a handbook of rules that they are not yet ready to acquire is unlikely to have much effect on most learners. This is particularly true of late-learned, complex grammatical systems, such as modal verbs or articles. In these cases, handbooks may also play a role, but again, probably a limited one, depending on writers' proficiency level and their willingness to invest the time and energy necessary to achieve accuracy with these more complex and difficult structures.

Articles are one good example of this type of structure. When ESL writers are given the rules for article use, they are often overwhelmed by their complexity and apparent capriciousness. Two suggestions may be helpful here. First, article use is easier to understand in a context larger than an individual sentence, so it makes sense to provide examples that are not limited to isolated sentences. Second, although article rules are indeed complex, the rules can be broken down into manageable subrules and applied by learners willing to take the time to use them. If teachers and students focus on these consistently and use an error correction strategy, article errors can be greatly reduced. The strategy obviously would involve more steps than the ones we presented for past tense, perhaps more of a flowchart than a list (for examples, see Master 470; Raimes, *Exploring* 279), but taken step by step, this can be

manageable for many ESL writers. Handbooks can certainly provide this kind of flowchart as well as much longer, contextualized examples of article use.

It is important to reiterate that although we are advocating similar strategies in the tense and article examples, the underlying processes are not the same. In the case of non-marking of tense, we have argued that these activities increase learners' control of existing knowledge, whereas in the article example, the intention is to develop knowledge of the target through rule explanation and use. We have already noted that the efficacy of the latter is by no means proven. Nevertheless, diligent ESL writers may apply the rules, in some cases, without necessarily having acquired them, thus increasing the accuracy of their writing. It is likely that only the most dedicated will do so because relying on mechanical rule application rather than intuition is incredibly labor intensive.

Handbooks will not be useful for all the rules in this group. Modal verbs, for example, are also extremely complex. The basic uses of modals, such as *permission*, *possibility*, *obligation*, and *ability*, are usually addressed in handbooks. What is often missing, however, is how modals can also reflect writers' emotions or their relationship to their audience. For example, a sentence such as "The government must do something about global warming immediately" could be a well-supported conclusion by a scientific authority or an emotional call to action from a politician. Both writers might express obligation but for different reasons. Most handbooks do not provide such context, and indeed, it is almost impossible for handbooks to cover all the nuances of modals. These cannot be neatly laid out in a list or chart. Nor do they lend themselves to contextualized exercises or error correction strategies. Modals certainly can be acquired and instruction may aid in their acquisition, but handbooks by their nature do not seem to be the place to look for substantial help in learning new structures with this level of complexity. Neither learners nor their teachers should expect handbook use to stand in for the long and difficult process of second language learning.

In general, simply giving ESL writers a handbook for their own use, or even assigning independent work in a handbook, will not guarantee that their writing will improve. Nevertheless, handbooks can play a role in helping ESL writers to improve the grammatical accuracy of their writing. The effectiveness of handbooks could be enhanced considerably if they were to include activities that are more closely tied to students' writing. Writing teachers can also help ESL students to use handbooks more intelligently if they understand the differences among various

types of grammatical rules and the processes that learners go through in acquiring them. Table 1 summarizes the differences among these rules and the manner in which we believe handbooks can assist learners toward target-like use of them.

Table 1. The role of handbooks in responding to various types of ESL writers' errors.

Type of Error	Example	Handbook activities/resources	Alternative resources
Control errors	Subject-verb agreement	* Contextualized exercises * Error correction strategies	
<hr/>			
Item learning errors			
* Point of entry	Gerund vs. infinitive	* Reference charts * Error correction strategies	Learner dictionaries
* No point of entry	Prepositions		Learner dictionaries
<hr/>			
System learning errors			
	* articles	* Flow charts * Multi-paragraph contextualized examples * Error correction strategies	
		* modal use unlikely	
<hr/>			

Notes

¹ We would like to thank Elizabeth Burmester for her valuable suggestions on an earlier draft of this paper.

² Since our focus is local accuracy, we acknowledge without comment the continuing debate over the efficacy and appropriateness of the presentation and instruction in handbooks on other aspects of the writing process (See Janangelo for a review).

³ The handbooks cited here are simply a representative sample, not an exhaustive survey.

⁴ The term *convention* is the more commonly used term in composition studies; applied linguists still tend to favor the term *rule*.

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Extending an invitation to join the Council of Writing Program Administrators

The Council of Writing Program Administrators offers a national network of scholarship and support for leaders of college and university writing programs.

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Writing Is Definitely Situated: Worlds of Writing Through a Vygotskian Lens

Carlann Fox Scholl

Dias, Patrick, Aviva Freedman, Peter Medway, and Anthony Pare. *Worlds Apart: Acting and Writing in Academic and Workplace Contexts*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1999. 264 pages. \$32.50 (paper); \$59.95 (cloth).

Worlds Apart: Acting and Writing in Academic and Workplace Contexts is a richly detailed description of classroom and workplace writing based on extensive empirical research interpreted through and contributing to lucid theoretical discussions. A grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada enabled the authors of this book—Patrick Dias, Aviva Freedman, Peter Medway and Anthony Pare, and other researchers, Christine Adam, Dawn Allen, Natasha Artemeva, Jane Ledwell-Brown, Stephen Fai, Jennifer Fraser, Danica Robertson, Tariq Sami, Graham Smart, and Scott Weir—to conduct this multisite, multidisciplinary investigation of academic and workplace writing over a six-year period in Montreal and Ottawa. Empirical data about “rich and multiple contours of writing” (ix) has been gathered in studies of writing across disciplinary communities and related workplace settings, including banking, social work, and architecture.

The book is divided into four sections. The first introduces the theoretical lenses—encapsulated in genre, activity, and semiotic theories—through which the authors analyze the wealth of data collected in these studies. The authors believe that “writing is not a module that we bring along and plug into any situation we find ourselves in” (17). Writing, they believe, is “profoundly situated” (220) and it is this theme that is explored in the remaining chapters of the book.

In the three chapters in Part II, the authors examine student writing produced for classes in three distinct disciplines—an undergraduate introductory course in the law, a year-long business course, and a design studio class for students of architecture—each of which in turn con-

tributes to an understanding of theory. The authors offer a fascinating study of undergraduate students joining the legal discourse community by learning to use specific language and thought patterns in their essays without explicit instruction. The work produced in this classroom illustrates the epistemic function of writing in school as well as the social and cultural nature of writing and learning. That is, not only did the students learn to write according to disciplinary expectations, they also acquired “the values, stance, and ideology of the course” (60).

Following the study of legal discourse, the authors complicate the discussion of the situatedness of academic writing when they examine student writing in a business course. The teacher, who “would rather have students spend time thinking rather than writing” (77), seems to have lacked a clear understanding of the epistemic function of writing. Yet, the study reveals sources of tension created less through personal failure than by the need to function within a larger system, which demands that certain concepts be taught and that large numbers of students be assessed efficiently. Because of such institutional constraints, the teacher of this course limited the amount of writing required of students because she did not have the time to read and evaluate large samples of student writing. Another tension became apparent when the teacher attempted to provide students with authentic business experiences, but the students understood that the assignments were still part of the activity system of the school. That is, even during the second semester of the business course, when students were working with a business organization, the students understood that the teacher remained the primary reader of their projects (although ostensibly they were solving an authentic business problem) and that all assignments (even simulations) were a school performance.

The writing of young architects complicates the issue of writing in the disciplines, because in this community of practice, language is not the central means of displaying knowledge. Much of the students’ writing in the studio design class, although epistemic, was not evaluated by the professor. Instead, students used writing as a tool to aid in their thinking and to help them manage long-term projects. The researchers noted that students expressed ideas in writing that could not be expressed in drawing, such as intentions and experiential impressions. In addition, students used writing as a form of display not for their professor but as if they wanted to be perceived as fascinating characters at some future time.

Just as writing in university-level classes is one component of a larger activity system, writing in the workplace is also “part of a complex network of activities of which composition is only one strand” (223).

While writing in school is epistemic and part of the work of schooling (including grading), which provides opportunities for speculation, questioning and hypothesizing, writing in the workplace serves different functions. There, it is instrumental and part of the work of the larger whole. There, newcomers must master a new “complex multisymbolic communicative web” (226) in order to become successful members of the community. What is required is not a simple transference of skills learned in school, but the ability to solve new rhetorical problems.

The three chapters in Part III of *Worlds Apart* illustrate how workplace writing can be distinguished from school writing in terms of its “complexity, multifunctionality, and implicatedness in power relations” (151). Each contribution to this section further problematizes our understanding of writing by revealing the complex purposes, authorship, audiences, and ideologies that characterize writing in the workplace. For example, the study of writing by social workers in a hospital illustrates how writing is socially motivated and reproduces certain ideologies through repeated sociorhetorical activity. The reports of the social workers recorded on medical charts are socially motivated to provide accountability to the larger community and to the social work community, but they also serve as a heuristic and thereby replicate the ideology of the hospital.

Sociorhetorical activity in chains of interconnected genres in the Bank of Canada illustrates the complexity of workplace writing. There, a discursively-created reality, the economy, is monitored and analyzed through interconnections of people, texts, and technologies or *distributed cognition*, for the purpose of providing knowledge about the Canadian economy that senior decision makers need for directing Canadian monetary policy. That is, thinking at the Bank of Canada occurs across the borders of individual minds through sets of generic texts, which become “repositories of communal knowledge, devices for generating new knowledge, [and] sites for enculturation” (142).

Writing in architectural practice provides another opportunity for the authors to continue to explore professional writing and to elucidate how this differs from school writing. Architects generate a quantity of rhetorically complex written documents using a number of modes of communication, usually without debating about the generic form or the mode to be used. More commonly, “an utterly familiar exigence is registered and an utterly specific medium-and-genre response automatically activated” (160). The written documents are rhetorically complex, partly because of the layers of interpersonal relationships in which the

architects work and partly because of the need to be persuasive. None of the expertise required for the constant and complex writing activity produced in the architectural firm studied here was learned in school.

The final section of *Worlds Apart* draws together the “unsettling implications for writing theory and the teaching of writing” (xi) suggested throughout the book, particularly the complexities of learning to write in the workplace. Still firmly anchored in theory, the discussion moves to how new employees must acquire new rhetorical moves and writing practices at work and how they must learn *how* to learn in situations where the focus is not on teaching and learning. Then the authors explore a model of school-to-work transition in which students learn by scaffolded participation in authentic workplace tasks monitored by experienced employees.

The authors could have included more discussion about those “unsettling implications” for writing theory. Although I have some ideas about what those implications might be, I wanted to know more specifically how the authors tied various challenges to writing theory to their on-site investigations. It is possible that this discussion should be explored in another document. Although the book may seem repetitious at first glance, the chapters of this book are carefully crafted, interrelated building blocks of a complex rhetorical structure, which has a spiral shape. Because the information in the book comes from a variety of studies and scholars, only skillful writing and editing could have produced a text that integrates these studies so that they build upon each other, build upon theory, and build new theoretical constructs. As Bazerman suggests in the introduction, “[t]he theoretically illuminated case studies reveal the rich and multiple contours of writing within each situation and thereby help us to see similar dynamics in other situations. The authors have used theory to help them figure out what they have seen and thereby have given us sharper theoretical lenses to see what is occurring in other places. That is among the best uses of theory” (ix). This alone makes *Worlds Apart* worth reading. One would hope for similar multisite investigations to be conducted and reported in the future. The book offers insights useful for a wide audience, including teachers and administrators in colleges and universities and in business and the professions. Such audiences will discover in this volume a readable and rewarding text.

Announcements

The Council of Writing Program Administrators is pleased to announce its first Award for **Best Article in *WPA: Writing Program Administration*.** “Constructing Composition: Reproduction and WPA Agency in Textbook Publishing,” by Professor Libby Miles of the University of Rhode Island, has been selected for the Award for Best Article for 1999-2000.

The CWPA has established this award as part of our efforts to develop and promote an understanding of writing program administration as intellectual work of depth, sophistication, and significance. The Awards Committee developed the following criteria for selection: 1) The article has an informed methodological or theoretical perspective; 2) The article is generative, suggesting ways of thinking beyond its immediate context so others can use, build on, or transform the ideas; 3) The article is useful to people in multiple settings and multiple contexts; 4) The article is connected to writing and writing instruction itself and helps the writing program administrator to think about these; 5) The Article helps WPAs get inside of and reflect on real practices in programs and institutions; 6) The article is interventionist, stimulating thought about a plan of action; 7) The article suggests potential for replication in other professional and institutional contexts; 8) The article has potential for continuing relevance for many years to come. Members of the Award Selection Committee were Shirley K Rose, Chair (Purdue University), William Condon (Washington State University), Marguerite Helmers (University of Wisconsin Oshkosh), Joseph Janangelo (Loyola University Chicago), and Ellen Quandahl (San Diego State University).

WPA: Writing Program Administration is soliciting manuscripts for a special-topic issue, “Changing the First-Year Writing Curriculum,” guest-edited by Christine Farris. We seek essays on major changes WPAs have made in the first-year writing curriculum at the program level, particularly new combinations of writing, reading, speaking, cultural studies, cross-curricular , or extracurricular work. Essays should address theoretical, pedagogical, political and practical reasons for the changes, and how the changes in curriculum affect who teaches the first-year writing course, instructor preparation, and institutional relationships. The deadline for submission of manuscripts is July 1, 2002. Please send manuscripts directly to Christine Farris, Department of English, Ballantine Hall 442, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana 47405. E-mail: crfarris@kate.ucs.indiana.edu.

Annual WPA Summer Workshop

July 7-11, 2002, Salt Lake City, Utah. Hosted by the University Writing Program, University of Utah. WPA invites up to 30 prospective and new writing program administrators—as well as experienced WPAs desiring renewal—to take part in an intensive four-day workshop in writing program administration. The Workshop will provide information, strategies, advice, encouragement, and a rich and supportive professional network.

The Workshop is intended not only for those with formal WPA appointments but also for others who are *de facto* WPAs, having primary responsibility for writing instruction or support of writing instruction on their campuses. Representatives from community colleges are especially encouraged to attend.

Topics will include curriculum and program design, faculty development, assessment, writing centers, and use of technology. We will consider administrative concerns, such as program organization, budget and personnel management, institutional contexts, and the politics of running writing programs. We will address career concerns of WPAs. Participants will also be encouraged to raise issues from their own professional situations.

The workshop will begin Sunday evening, July 7, and will conclude with lunch on Thursday, July 11. Sessions will run from 9 to 4:30 each day, with consulting times available in the evenings.

Workshop Leaders: *Jeanne Gunner* is director of Core Composition at Santa Clara University and editor of *College English*. *Duane Roen*, Director of the Center for Learning and Teaching Excellence at Arizona State University, served as WPA on the same campus.

About Salt Lake City, Utah: Salt Lake City is the home of the University of Utah, the 2002 Winter Olympics, and the world's largest collection of family history records. From the University, visitors can easily access downtown by bus, light rail, and taxi. The city has a gift for flowers and gardens that visitors will enjoy. The new multi-use Gateway center downtown offers thirty acres of excellent shopping, dining, and entertainment. Temperatures in early July run in the high 80s. For more information about Salt Lake City, point your browser to <http://utah.citysearch.com/>

Workshop Location: The University of Utah and Olympic Village sit on the foothills of the Wasatch Mountains, with easy access to the Bonneville Shoreline Trail for hiking or jogging, or enjoying a view of the valley. The University Golf Course is a five-minute walk from the workshop site, perfect for evening recreation. access

to University recreational facilities can be arranged on request. For more information about the host university, visit <http://www.utah.edu>. For more information about the host writing program, visit <http://www.utah.edu/uwp/about.html>

The \$730 workshop fee includes all materials, meals, and double-occupancy lodging at the University of Utah Olympic Village, Sunday through Wednesday. Special events include a Sunday evening supper and reception, a Tuesday night banquet, and a Thursday lunch (sponsored by Longman). For more details, please point your browser to <http://www.cc.utah.edu/~dd4/wpaworkshop.html> or e-mail Doug Downs at d.downs@utah.edu

2002 Summer Workshop Registration Form

Please e-mail d.downs@utah.edu if you intend to register. Then photocopy, complete, and mail this form, with your personal or business check payable to the University Writing Program, to the address below.

Name _____
(as you would like it to appear on your badge)

Institution _____

E-mail: _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (work) _____ (home) _____

Fax: _____

Fees

_____ Workshop Fee — \$730

_____ Workshop Fee, Late Registration (June 1-June 30) — \$780

_____ Accompanying Family or Guests (until June 30; \$300/person)

_____ Banquet Fee for Family or Guests — \$30 per person

Total Payment

- Include a check for the workshop registration fee with this form.
- Reservations for additional family/guests may be made at any time through June 30. However, because housing availability is subject to change, we encourage you to make reservations and payments for family/guests with this form.
- No workshop registrations or family/guest reservations can be accepted after June 30.
- Full refunds will be given for cancellations received in writing by June 30, 2002. After June 30, a partial refund of \$400 will be given.

Please mail completed form and check (payable to the University Writing Program) to: Bridgid Best, ATTN: WPA Workshop, University Writing Program , University of Utah, 255 South Central Campus Drive, Room 3700, Salt Lake City, UT 84112-0495. **Details:** <http://www.cc.utah.edu/~dd4/wpaworkshop.html>. **Questions?** d.downs@utah.edu

Call for Proposals WPA²⁰⁰²: The Form(ation) of Relationships

July 11-14, 2002, Park City, Utah. Organized by The Council of Writing Program Administrators (WPA). Plenary Speakers: *Barbara Cambridge, Doug Hesse, Becky Howard, and Tom Miller*. Program Chair: Kathleen Yancey. Local Arrangements: Kristine Hansen. Host: Brigham Young University

It's a truism that WPAs act as the nexus for a diversity of constituencies. Most of us became teachers so that we could work with students, fostering relationships with them and helping them foster relationships with the materials of and the intellectual life represented in the curriculum. As WPAs, we continue this effort, especially at a programmatic level, where we bring together students, discourses of the curriculum, discourses of the academy, and (for many of us) discourses of the public. And as part of this rhetorical situation, we develop another set of relationships, socializing—as we are socialized by—graduate students joining us as fellow scholars and teachers.

At the same time WPAs find themselves talking with, coordinating with, working with, and sometimes coming into conflict with, many others, among them—high school faculty, faculty in various programs and departments across campus/es, other administrators on and off campus, and, colleagues and others around the country. From one perspective, then, positive relationships of various kinds are at the heart of what WPAs do. Without them, WPAs can't accomplish much. With them, much synergy and symbiosis can result. Everyone gains something.

WPAs also do the intellectual work that the formation of relationship requires. They tease out the connections and overlaps between and among syllabus and curriculum and program and assessment and student identity, creating an experience that locates students and helps them enter and thrive within the academy and beyond. WPAs help theory inform practice inform theory. WPAs bring the past into dialogue with both present and future.

I invite proposals addressing this theme as well as those addressing any issue of concern or interest to WPAs, including those who work in WAC programs, writing centers, technical or professional communication programs, departments of writing, graduate programs, and freshman composition programs.

- What are the “natural” relationships for us? What form do they take? What kind of culture fosters them? What about them makes them natural, and how might we build upon them?

- As the role and work of WPAs have changed, how has our relationship-making changed?
- Is there a life cycle to the relationships that center WPAs? We talk in stages—initiation, maintenance, and elaboration or extension: is this too simplistic a model? What are other models? How does a model influence what we do?
- Can we identify impediments to relationships? Are they systematic? How might we categorize them? As important, how might we productively respond to them?
- How does relationship-making change the work that we do? How does it change us?

I also strongly encourage reports on assessments of writing programs or features within them, including “local” studies, discussions of effective practices in program design, faculty development, working conditions, and so on. I welcome as well analyses of issues like distance learning, articulation, technologies and writing, and education reform. Of particular interest this year, perhaps, are three related topics: 1) the nature of dual enrollment programs; 2) the nature and experience of specifically relationship-based programs like learning communities and service learning programs; and 3) our construction of the theory-practice relationship. These topics are merely suggested. Please feel free to discuss ideas with me. I invite proposals for a range of formats, including standard papers, workshops, roundtables/issue groups, and “effective practices” and/or poster presentations.

In the spirit of recent WPA conferences, this one, too, will be participant-centered and highly interactive, with frequent breakouts, working group sessions, extensive discussions, and social opportunities.

The conference will open Thursday with a plenary address and a reception and will close Sunday morning. Registration costs of \$210, with discounts for nontenure-line registrants, will include breakfasts, receptions, breaks, and a banquet.

About Park City: Park City’s “old town” has been beautifully restored and preserved and is home to many award-winning restaurants, several theaters, a variety of art galleries, interesting and expensive shops, a couple of museums, and a good sprinkling of taverns and micro-breweries. In the summer, the hills and mountains surrounding Park City offer a variety of outdoor activities, including hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, fishing, golfing, hot air ballooning, hay rides, Alpine sliding, taking chair lifts to the summits.

The conference is being hosted by the Shadow Ridge Lodge, where rates will be \$65/night for a hotel room, \$100 for a one-bedroom condo, and \$120 for a two-bedroom condo.

Transportation: The Salt Lake International Airport is just ten minutes from the heart of downtown. Two van shuttles take passengers from the airport to Park City, about 38 miles away, for \$27 per person, one-way. Rental cars are also available at the airport. The airport is Delta's western hub, and is served by nine major and two regional airlines.

Submission Information: Proposals—of not more than one page, single spaced—received by February 15, 2002, will receive highest priority, and invitations based on those proposals will be issued March 15. Should program openings remain, additional proposals will be received until March 15 and invitations sent by April 15. Please include a cover sheet with the following information: Name; Address; Email ID; Type of Session

Please send completed proposals and inquiries to Kathleen Yancey, 2002 WPA Program Chair, Department of English, PO Box 340524, 602 Strode Tower, Clemson University, Clemson, SC 29634-0524. [Kyancey@clemson.edu](mailto:kyancey@clemson.edu). Phone 864-656-5394. FAX 864-656-1846

WPA Assessment Institute (July 11, 2002)

WPA will offer a one-day Assessment Institute on July 11, 2002, just prior to the opening of WPA 2002. Led by Chris Anson, Chet Pryor, and Kathleen Yancey, the Institute will focus on issues of program assessment. Specifically, participants will examine 1) various options for program assessment; 2) the advantages and disadvantages of each; 3) ways to negotiate for best assessment practices, and 4) ways to represent and build on findings.

Hosted at the Shadow Ridge Lodge in Park City, the site of WPA2002, the Institute will run from 8-4 and will include lunch. Enrollment is limited to 25 people, and the cost is \$125. The WPA Executive Board has established a fund of \$250 to assist those whose institutions are unable to cover the full cost. Please see the February Newsletter for additional details; to sign up before then, please email Kathleen Yancey kyancey@clemson.edu

Institute Leaders: *Chet Pryor*, as a testing coordinator for Montgomery College, maintained day-to-day control of one campus' exit assessment process for first-semester writing. From high school teacher to Professor of English, for over 34 years of teaching he has seen

assessment from both the secondary and college perspectives. Chet's most recent assessment activity was the development and delivery of an assessment workshop for the 2001 NCTE Conference in Baltimore.

Chris Anson is Professor of English and director of the Campus Writing and Speaking Program at North Carolina State University, where he is working with nine colleges to implement curricular changes in writing and speaking based on departmental-specific outcomes assessment. Much of his professional work and publications have focused on classroom-based assessment practices, especially in response to student writing. Chris has spoken or led faculty workshops at over 200 conferences and universities in 38 states and five foreign countries.

Kathleen Blake Yancey, Roy Pearce Professor of English at Clemson University, has worked in assessment for over two decades, directing a testing center, developing portfolio models for classroom and programmatic purposes, and coordinating projects linking high schools and colleges. Since 1998, she has consulted for a FIPSE project linking Tidewater Community College and Virginia Beach City Schools. She also works in program assessment; one of her current projects is assisting UC Davis document their Hewlett-sponsored general education reform.

The Reasoning Center

At <http://www.reasoningcenter.org/>, The Reasoning Center is a multi disciplinary Website promoting the use of computerized resources to aid in the teaching of reasoning—is pleased to announce its first conference: Improving the Reasoning of College Students.

The Center is seeking colloquia on effective classroom techniques for improving reasoning skills in a variety of disciplines. Examples of possible topics are improving reasoning in English composition classes, innovative courses in logic and critical thinking, problem solving techniques in the physical and social sciences, teaching decision techniques in business and data management, explaining the logic operators in computer programming courses, and new methods for teaching mathematical concepts.

Presentations should last no more than 50 minutes, including discussion and displays. We encourage the use of technology, including demonstrations of computer programs used in teaching. As a preliminary stage, a one page précis, as part of an email message, may be sent to director@reasoningcenter.org. Include your name, position, depart-

ment and university affiliation, email and mailing addresses. Deadline is March 1, 2002. The conference itself will be next May 20th and 21st, 2002, at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia.

Call for Papers: *More than 100 Years of Solitude: WPA Work before 1976.* Writing Program Administration publications have focused almost solely on the contemporary pedagogical and ideological trends and influences, on training, theory, practice and research. However, none of this scholarship focuses on the institutional, political, and fiscal battles that surrounded writing instruction (whether introductory writing or service writing courses) at most American institutions from the point in the 1890s when composition became a required course at so many schools.

The result is that not only is our sense of history of Writing Program Administration often one-sided, but we also have little historical context for the ever-changing conditions of our departmental situations. Historical amnesia of this sort therefore creates an under-theorized discourse.

In response to this, we are proposing an edited collection that focuses on the history of writing program administration prior to the establishment of the WPA. We are seeking abstracts for articles that address the following questions: What are the untold narratives of writing program administration? Who are the specific faculty/administrators who have contributed to this history? What specific histories have contributed to (or detracted from) the legitimacy of the field? What methodological questions need to be addressed when writing an administrative history? What are some of the difficulties that surround the writing of administrative histories? How do such histories help inform theory and practice of Writing Program Administration today? Deadline for proposals and/or manuscripts: July 1, 2002. Contact Information: Dr. Barbara L'Eplattenier, Department of Rhetoric and Writing, University of Arkansas-Little Rock, Little Rock, AR 72204; E-mail: bleplatt@ualr.edu. Or, Dr. Lisa Mastrangelo, College of St. Elizabeth, Santa Maria Hall, Morristown, NJ 07960; Email: lmastrangelo@liza.st-elizabeth.edu

JWPAs: Voices from Above, Below, and Within, Debra Dew and Alice Horning, Editors. We invite papers for a new collection to examine the position of junior faculty members as Writing Program Administrators. While WPA guidelines recommend that administrative appointments be

offered at the associate level, junior faculty find such positions enticing, and English departments and university administrators regularly launch young, untenured faculty into administrative space. Our goal is to identify and examine critically the politics of the JWPA position. This collection speaks to graduate students presently dreaming of venturing into administrative space/s, nurturing their desires, and to their administrative mentors, as well as to senior faculty and administrators who authorize such positions.

We invite submissions from senior faculty, such as department chairs, graduate program directors, and senior administrators who see the position of WPA from the point of view of upper administration. From this perspective, how is writing program administration viewed, and how are junior faculty who take such positions perceived? How are new PhDs encouraged to take on administrative work or discouraged from doing so, and why? Issues of mentoring and ethics can also be explored.

We invite submissions from junior faculty members or PhD students who are considering administrative work in writing programs. What are the attractions of working as a WPA, particularly prior to earning tenure? What are the concerns about career development as well as personal and professional issues? We invite articles that explore the nature of administrative desire, its origins and aims. How is administrative desire stirred in graduate students, and to what extent may WPA desire prove dangerous: professionally, politically, physically-for writing program administrators at the junior level?

We invite submissions from working writing program administrators, both junior and senior. What are the strengths of taking a WPA post as an untenured faculty member? Along with explorations of issues of authority and administrative responsibility, we welcome articles that frankly discuss the impact of administrative workloads on the JWPA's progress toward tenure and promotion, including time management, the challenge of simultaneously expending creative energy on self (research and teaching) and the program (writing faculty and students). In addition, we seek articles that explore the types of rhetorical training doctoral students need to get positions as JWPAs and also to manage the demands of both tenure and promotion and the critical problem solving requirements of the job.

Submit a 500-1000 word abstract to both Alice Horning and Debra Dew, either electronically (attached to email as a Word document) or on paper as follows: Alice Horning, Department of Rhetoric, Communication and Journalism, 316 Wilson Hall, Oakland University, Rochester, MI 48309, or email horning@oakland.edu. For Debra Dew,

Department of English, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, 1420 Austin Bluffs Parkway, PO Box 7150, Colorado Springs, CO 80933-7150 or email ddew@brain.uccs.edu. Proposal review begins January 30, 2002, with completed papers due June 1, 2002.

The Third Symposium on Second Language Writing will be held on October 11-12, 2002 at Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana, USA. This year's Symposium, entitled "Constructing Knowledge: Approaches to Inquiry in Second Language Writing," will feature sixteen scholars who will explore various ways in which knowledge is constructed, transformed, disseminated and negotiated in the field of second language writing. Presenters will include: Dwight Atkinson, Linda, Lonon Blanton, Colleen Brice, Christine Pearson Casanave, Dana Ferris, John Flowerdew, Richard Haswell, Sarah Hudelson, Ken Hyland, Xiaoming Li, Rosa Manchon, Paul Kei Matsuda, Susan Parks, Miyuki Sasaki, Tony Silva, and Bob Weissberg. For more information, please visit: <http://icdweb.cc.purdue.edu/~silvat/symposium/2002/>.

The Writing Instructor, a freely available networked journal and digital community, announces the release of Beta 2.0, "The Role of Writing in Teaching Media Literacy and Popular Culture in the Secondary School" at <http://www.writinginstructor.com>. This release, edited by Janet Alsup, includes hypertexts, essays, an interview, and classroom activities featuring Roy Fox, Donna Alvermann, Carrie King Wastal, Rich Lane, Diane Penrod, Renee Hobbs, David Rieder, Stanley Harrison, and Bronwyn T. Williams. Beta 3.0, a multi-journal, multi-site issue on electronic publishing and in cooperation with *Academic.Writing*, *CCC Online*, *Enculturation*, and *Kairos* is in development. Archives of all articles from the print version of *TWI* (1981-1997) will also be available online soon. *TWI* accepts open submissions for peer review year round. Contact editors and publishers David Blakesley (blakesle@purdue.edu) or Dawn Formo (dformo@csusm.edu) for more information, or visit the Website at <http://www.writinginstructor.com>.

The Council of Writing Program Administrators Website:

<http://www.wpacouncil.org>

Contributors to WPA 25.1/2

Diane Boehm, Director of the University Writing Program at Saginaw Valley State University in Michigan, a university with about 9000 students, has developed the cross-disciplinary writing program over the past seven years. Recently appointed Director of Instructional Support Programs, she also coordinates faculty development activities, with the goal of providing opportunities for both students and faculty to become ever more effective. She also chairs the Teaching and Learning with Technology Roundtable, which focuses on best practices for integrating technology into teaching and learning. Her current research, in collaboration with a Polish colleague who created course modules for the European Union-funded Leonardo da Vinci distance learning project, explores ways in which cultural values and national traditions shape integration of technology into teaching and learning.

Jacqueline Evans received her MA in applied linguistics from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She has taught ESL and composition at DePaul University, University of Illinois at Chicago and the City Colleges of Chicago. She and Jessica Williams are the authors of *Getting There: Tasks for Academic Writing* (Heinle, 2000).

Eric Gardner teaches American literature and culture, multimedia studies, and writing at Saginaw Valley State University. He has coordinated writing centers at SVSU (where he founded the “Teachers in the Center” program with Diane Boehm) and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Mary E. Hocks is an Assistant Professor of English at Georgia State University, where she teaches rhetoric and composition courses and also directs the writing across the curriculum program. She has published articles on hypertext, gender and technology, and multimedia design in *Pre/Text*, *Computers and Composition*, *Works and Days*, and *Electronic Communication Across the Curriculum*. Her co-edited book, *Eloquent Images*, an interdisciplinary collection of essays about visual rhetoric in new media, is forthcoming from MIT Press.

Deborah Huntley received her PhD in Chemistry from Cornell University in 1984. She was employed for fourteen years as a research chemist at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, where she published over thirty papers on the mechanisms of heterogeneous catalytic reactions. During her years at ORNL, she served as research advisor for numerous

graduate and undergraduate students and ultimately decided to make higher education her career. She joined the faculty of Saginaw Valley State University in 1998 and is currently both Associate Professor of Chemistry and Acting Assistant Dean of the College of Science, Engineering, and Technology.

Gary M. Lange is an Associate Professor in the Department of Biology at Saginaw Valley State University. He teaches undergraduate courses in anatomy and physiology, general biology, ethology, endocrinology, and neurobiology. At the graduate level, he teaches several courses in science education. His scientific research interests focus on hormonal and developmental aspects of behavior in animals. In education research, his focus is on developing constructivist pedagogy in K-12 science and the incorporation of writing at all levels of science education. Gary is very interested in discussing and collaborating with other scientists and science educators in projects to develop greater emphasis on the actual practice of science research in the classroom.

Rich Raymond is a Professor of Rhetoric at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, where he teaches composition, technical communication, composition theory, and the history of rhetoric. He has published articles on teaching composition, training TAs, and building learning communities. He also chairs the Department of Rhetoric and Writing and directs the Little Rock Writing Project.

Carlann Fox Scholl has MA degrees in American Studies and English (TESL) and is now a PhD student in Rhetoric and Composition at Purdue University. She has a previous publication in *ORTESOL Journal*. Her current projects include applications of genre and activity theory.

Andrew Swihart is an Associate Professor of Psychology at Saginaw Valley State University. His research interests are in the areas of the neuropsychology of normal aging and the dementias, clinical neuropsychological assessment, and forensic neuropsychology.

Jessica Williams teaches in the MA TESOL program at the University of Illinois at Chicago, where she also directs the ESL composition program. She has published articles on variety of topics in second language acquisition, including second language writing, lexical acquisition, and the effect of focus on form. She and Jacqueline Evans are the authors of *Getting There: Tasks for Academic Writing* (Heinle, 2000).

