

programs, I leaped in to administer the reform. Working on those projects for a much shorter time (two and a half years versus eight) did not allow all the changes I initiated to mature fully. Still, many were solidly in place and growing when I changed institutions: I established peer teaching groups and a development program for peer mentors. I trained well over a hundred new graduate students to teach the core curriculum and involved a quarter of them in curricular revision projects (some of which have resulted in collaborative conference presentations and a potential publication). With graduate students, I developed the reader and teaching apparatus to accompany the course and in the program's second year worked with a publisher to produce it.

The results and nature of this program development and the trajectory of my professional life are the reasons I write now. Perhaps if our field, if our colleagues in the field, and ultimately if our educational and publishing institutions understood the scholarly nature of program development (as I have enacted it and lived it every day for more than a decade), if they credited the intellectual work and property I and others like me generate, perhaps in this dream, I would not look with chagrin at a recent publication, a textbook that teaches the writing program I developed, a textbook with my successor's name on the cover, not my own.

The forces that lead up to this result do not present a clear case of right or wrong because they are complex. But I ask, "Am I to remain invisible because my administrative scholarship did not constitute intellectual work and property? Because my program could not travel with me when I changed institutions and now 'belongs' to my successors?"

The WPA document overlooks two separate issues of ownership. Who owns administrative property that is developed collaboratively? And who owns a curricular, administrative, and scholarly program when one leaves the institution in which she developed it? Because I did not hold a tenure-accruing position I could, according to one legal opinion, lay claim to none of my work (as a faculty member could). Instead, my intellectual contributions belonged to the university that employed me. Thus, my story as a WPA adds peculiar twists to the issues the WPA document tries to address.

## The WPA: A Reconsideration, a Redefinition

*Theresa Enos*

Because administrative duties—often heavy duties—come with the job in composition and rhetoric, I would like to see the role of Writing Program Administrators expanded in the WPA draft document, "Evaluating the Intellectual Work of Writing Program Administrators." This document's main argument, based on the Portland Resolution defining the intellectual work of WPAs,

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is that “While some of the work we do as WPAs is managerial in nature, the majority of our efforts are conceptually driven by the scholarship and research in composition and rhetoric.” My concern about both documents is that they focus on directors of programs, who have the real title, notwithstanding that all of us involved in writing program administration need our administrative work to count more than service in order for it to have some real exchange value. (Our membership brochure invites *all* who work in college writing to join the Council.)

Just being in rhet/comp—whether one is the director of writing or not—nearly always carries with it an onerous burden of administrative work—and for those to whom such duties are delegated, their work is often even less recognized and compensated than is the director’s work. Much of the nitty-gritty daily work typically is delegated by the director to other rhet/comp faculty, part-timers, and graduate students. The document needs to address the very real problem that this considerable administrative work counts very little in terms of exchange value of traditional scholarship.

The document makes a strong argument that the WPA’s (the director’s) role is not simply managerial, as it is most often seen by upper administration, but intellectual. Duties outlined in both the draft document and the Portland Resolution include program design, curricular design, instructional materials and methods, faculty and staff training and supervision—and the dissemination of all this in the form of research and publication. It sounds as if the director actually carries out all these duties singlehandedly. And perhaps some do, especially in many two-year and liberal arts colleges, perhaps even in a number of comprehensive universities. From what I can ascertain from the little research that’s been done, however, in large state-supported universities with large, well-defined writing programs, most of this work is delegated.

I’ll take my own university as an example. Here are the duties the Portland Resolution lists that fit two of the categories in the research/teaching/service trilogy. One category is faculty development and other teaching—such as the grad course in the teaching of writing, designing or teaching faculty development seminars, training tutors, training and supervising teaching assistants and writing staff, evaluating teaching performance, preparing and conducting workshops, undergraduate teaching. Another category is writing development—such as designing curricula and course syllabi, monitoring course content, and selecting textbooks. In the large program where I work, these duties in both categories—by necessity—are delegated to other comp/rhet faculty, lecturers, and grad students. Two advanced grad students serve as assistants to the director and are in charge of first-year comp registration and the grade-appeal process, just to list two of their many responsibilities. Writing faculty and lecturers serve as course directors and are responsible for the supervision and training of both new and experienced TAs.

A third category focuses on duties that fall specifically under service, or administration, such as office management and advising, which in my program are delegated to the administrative assistants and support staff. Also in this

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category are assessment, placement, and articulation with various programs, departments, colleges, and outside agencies and institutions, including community literacy programs—which are mostly carried out by our University Composition Board, staffed by academic professionals who do not have continuing status.

My concern is that not only is there downshifting of work to those who get little if any credit or compensation for it but also that, in this time of budget cuts, even more responsibilities are being delegated to parttimers, graduate students, and nontenured faculty. I do think we should be looking closely to see that our official position in disseminating the document on intellectual work does not valorize the work of the person with the official title and real pay at the expense of those who are doing the daily nitty-gritty work with no commensurate recognition or compensation. Heavy work/light power is, of course, a recognizable pattern of the field itself. The document should address this delegated-but-real work that is done by administrators without the official title. Such work also should be counted as intellectual because it is disciplinary based.

The managerial role in directing a program is valuable because it often leads to a higher administrative position, precisely because it's viewed as managerial. Delegated WPA work, however, usually does not lead into upper-level positions. In the case of grad students, such work can indeed make them more attractive on the market; too often they are required to direct first-year writing as part of the job offer—and then more often than not they are expected to do the traditional scholarship, usually in the form of the single-authored book (excluding the textbook). Newly hired WPAs usually do not come into the job with credit-bearing WPA work on their transcripts, which would credential this discipline-based research and intellectual work. We need to have a WPA course as a credit-bearing course in all our graduate programs. And for faculty, being given course release as compensation for their administrative work can hurt at time of promotion and tenure. Teaching one less course every semester for five or six years may make it more difficult to document a strong teaching record—that is, nondirector WPAs may not have the same chances to develop a reputation for excellence in teaching as other colleagues have.

The document, I believe, is our best hope in ending the historical disciplinary bias against rhet/comp because, when the document equitably represents all of us and our various roles, we will better learn how to describe and document our work—and our own departments will have available to them an instrument to help them understand that research, teaching, and administration in rhetoric and composition studies should be seen as perspectives instead of rigid categories, each informing the other.