

# Writing Program Administration

*Journal of the  
Council of Writing Program Administrators*

## **Editors**

Dennis Lynch . . . . . Michigan Technological University  
Marguerite Helmers . . . . . University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

## **Production Editor**

David Blakesley . . . . . Purdue University

## **Editorial Assistants**

Jennifer Courtney . . . . . Purdue University  
Debrah Huffman . . . . . Purdue University  
Julia Jasken . . . . . Michigan Technological University  
Michael Carlson Kapper . . . . . Purdue University  
Jessie Kapper . . . . . Purdue University  
Carlann Fox Scholl . . . . . Purdue University

## **Editorial Board**

Chris M. Anson . . . . . North Carolina State University  
Donald Daiker . . . . . Miami University, Oxford, Ohio  
Donna Dunbar-Odom . . . . . Texas A&M University-Commerce  
Russell Durst . . . . . University of Cincinnati  
Beth Daniell . . . . . Clemson University  
Christine Farris . . . . . Indiana University  
Jeff Grabill . . . . . Georgia State University  
Kristine Hansen . . . . . Brigham Young University  
Deborah Holdstein . . . . . Governors State University  
Mara Holt . . . . . Ohio University  
Catherine Lattrell . . . . . Penn State Altoona College  
Brian Huot . . . . . University of Louisville  
Susan H. McLeod . . . . . University of California, Santa Barbara  
Libby Miles . . . . . University of Rhode Island  
Richard Miller . . . . . Rutgers University  
Clyde Moneyhun . . . . . University of Delaware  
Elizabeth Rankin . . . . . University of North Dakota  
Keith Rhodes . . . . . Missouri Western State College  
Shirley K Rose . . . . . Purdue University  
Peter Sands . . . . . University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee  
Tony Silva . . . . . Purdue University  
Irwin Weiser . . . . . Purdue University  
Edward M. White . . . . . University of Arizona  
Stephen Wilhoit . . . . . University of Dayton

## Council of Writing Program Administrators

### Executive Board

The Council of Writing Program Administrators is a national association of college and university faculty who serve or have served as directors of first-year composition or writing programs, coordinators of writing centers and writing workshops, chairpersons and members of writing-program-related committees, or in similar administrative capacities. The Council of Writing Program Administrators is an affiliate of the Association of American Colleges and the Modern Language Association.

#### **President**

Kathleen Blake Yancey . . . . . Clemson University

#### **Vice President**

Chris M. Anson . . . . . North Carolina State University

#### **Secretary**

Jennie Dautermann . . . . . Miami University, Oxford, Ohio

#### **Treasurer**

John Heyda . . . . . Miami University, Middletown, Ohio

#### **Past President**

Douglas Hesse . . . . . Illinois State University

#### **Executive Committee**

Linda Adler-Kassner . . . . . Eastern Michigan University

William Condon . . . . . Washington State University

Alice Gillam . . . . . University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Susanmarie Harrington . . . . . Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis

Clyde Moneyhun . . . . . University of Delaware

Meg Morgan . . . . . University of North Carolina-Charlotte

Duane Roen . . . . . Arizona State University

Elizabeth VanderLei . . . . . Calvin College

Irwin Weiser . . . . . Purdue University

#### **Journal Co-Editors**

Marguerite Helmers . . . . . University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

Dennis Lynch . . . . . Michigan Technological University

#### **Journal Production Editor**

David Blakesley . . . . . Purdue University

#### **Consultant Evaluator Service Co-Directors**

Deborah Holdstein . . . . . Governors State University

Edward M. White . . . . . University of Arizona

## Author's Guide

*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.

### Reviews

WPA publishes reviews of books related to writing programs and their administration. Publishers are invited to send appropriate professional books to Marguerite Helmers, who assigns reviews.

## **Announcements and Advertising**

Relevant announcements and calls for papers will be published as space permits. Send them in electronic format to David Blakesley (blakesle@purdue.edu) by October 15 (for the Fall/Winter issue) or March 15 (for the Spring issue). Advertisers should contact David Blakesley for deadlines, publication rates, and specifications.

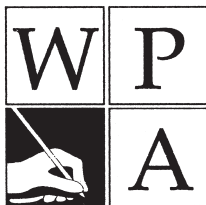
## **Addresses**

Address articles and editorial correspondence to Dennis Lynch, Co-Editor, WPA, Humanities, Michigan Technological University, 1400 Townsend Drive, Houghton, MI 49931. E-mail: dalylnch@mtu.edu.

Address book reviews to Marguerite Helmers, Co-Editor, WPA, Department of English, 800 Algoma Blvd., University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, Oshkosh, WI 54901. E-mail: helmers@uwosh.edu.

Address advertising and production questions to David Blakesley, Production Editor, WPA, Department of English, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 47907. E-mail: blakesle@purdue.edu. Fax: (765) 494-3780.





# Writing Program Administration

Journal of the  
Council of Writing Program Administrators  
Volume 25.3 (Spring 2002)

## Table of Contents

<b>Letter from the Editors</b> .....	7
<b>Directed Self-Placement in the University</b> .....	9
David Blakesley	
<b>Placement and Instruction in Context: Situating Writing Within a First-Year Program</b> .....	41
Theresa Freda Nicolay	
<b>Writing Program Design in the Metropolitan University: Toward Constructing Community Partnerships</b> .....	61
Jeffrey T. Grabill and Lynée Lewis Gaillet	
<b>The Power of “De-positioning”: Narrative Strategies in Stories of Stopping</b> .....	79
Ruth Mirtz, Keith Rhodes, Susan Taylor, and Kim van Alkemade	
<b>Starting over with Basic Writing</b> .....	97
Review Essay Scott Stevens McNenny, Gerri, and Sallyanne Fitzgerald, eds. <i>Mainstreaming Basic Writers: Politics and Pedagogies of Access</i> Fox, Tom. <i>Defending Access: A Critique of Standards in Higher Education</i>	
<b>Announcements</b> .....	105
<b>Contributors</b> .....	107

# 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.

Membership benefits include the following:

- A subscription to *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, a semi-annual refereed journal
- Invitations to the annual WPA Summer Workshops and Conferences
- Invitations to submit papers for sessions that WPA sponsors at MLA and CCCC
- Participation in the WPA Research Grant Program, which distributes several awards, ranging from \$1000 to \$2000
- Invitations to the annual WPA breakfast at CCCC and the annual WPA party at MLA
- Information about the WPA Consultant-Evaluator program

## **Annual Dues**

Members: \$30

Graduate Students: \$10

Libraries: \$40

## **To Join**

Send your name, address, institutional affiliation, and dues to

Jennie Dautermann, WPA Secretary  
Department of English  
Miami University  
Oxford, Ohio 45056

## Letter from the Editors

We continue to be impressed with the quality and the range of the scholarship being produced by WPAs and submitted to the journal. In this issue both range and quality are evident.

David Blakesley is concerned with the ethical and moral issues surrounding placement into first-year composition, and he believes that directed self-placement, properly implemented, can have far-reaching effects on “instructor training, instructor-student relations, instructor and student attitudes, and [ . . . ] student performance.” His article is more than just an argument for directed self-placement; it is a story about persuading an institution to accept change, about how to identify and approach the various stakeholders, about what strategies to consider, and about where to look for potential resistances. Drawing from his experiences at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, he points out that in the process of arguing for and then implementing their program, WPAs there discovered that changes to the placement procedures had implications well beyond the writing program. They were able to “reshape institutional contexts and conversations.”

Theresa Freda Nicolay also is concerned with placement and remediation. She asserts that assessment is based on dialogue, writing, and revision, a thoughtful process of teachers coming to know the students in their classes and WPAs coming to know the students in their programs. In this model of placement, the students take responsibility for their own placement and project which course of the composition sequence will help them do their best work. Because students are “individuals who learn in a variety of ways,” they must be offered the opportunity to make decisions about how they can use their own learning strategies to meet the demands of the university.

Jeffrey T. Grabill and Lynée Lewis Gaillet show us what is involved in shaping a writing program committed to community-based work. Like Blakesley’s piece, this one offers both a concrete description of one particular program (re)design, and a broader vision of the role of writing programs in insitutional change. They argue that as universities interact more with surrounding communities, writing programs are poised to become the institutional home for such community-based work and the new research projects emanating from it. We thus learn both how to build effective relationships between a writing program and the communities and organizations outside the university, and how our identities as WPAs will necessarily change in the process.

Finally, Ruth Mirtz, Susan Taylor, Keith Rhodes, and Kim van Alkemade combined to tell four different stories about “stopping” as WPAs. On the surface the personal reflections look and sound familiar: struggles with colleagues and administrators, frustrations and refusals, and finally just stopping. Yet the stories quickly show us what the authors explicitly affirm: that “WPAs don’t stop in any simple way.” The work we value and the beliefs about student learning to which we are committed linger beyond the tenure of the position. Like the other articles in this issue, this article provides both local stories and a broader view of writing program administration as a whole.

*Dennis Lynch, Michigan Technological University*  
*Marguerite Helmers, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh*  
*David Blakesley, Purdue University*

