Writing Program Administration

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Journal of the Council of Writing Program Administrators

Writing Program Administration

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Council of Writing Program Administrators

Guide for Authors

WPA: Writing Program Administration publishes empirical and theoretical research on issues in writing program administration. We publish a wide range of research in various formats, research that not only helps both titled and untitled administrators of writing programs do their jobs, but also helps our discipline advance academically, institutionally, and nationally.
Possible topics of interest include:

- writing faculty professional development
- writing program creation and design
- uses for national learning outcomes and statements that impact writing programs
- classroom research studies
- labor conditions: material, practical, fiscal
- WAC/WID/WC/CAC (or other sites of communication/writing in academic settings)
- writing centers and writing center studies
- teaching writing with electronic texts (multimodality) and teaching in digital spaces
- theory, practice, and philosophy of writing program administration
- outreach and advocacy
- curriculum development
- writing program assessment
- WPA history and historical work
- national and regional trends in education and their impact on WPA work
- issues of professional advancement and writing program administration
- diversity and WPA work
- writing programs in a variety of educational locations (SLACs, HBCUs, two-year colleges, Hispanic schools, non-traditional schools, dual credit or concurrent enrollment programs, prison writing programs)
- interdisciplinary work that informs WPA practices

This list is meant to be suggestive, not exhaustive. Contributions must be appropriate to the interests and concerns of the journal and its readership. The editors welcome empirical research (quantitative as well as qualitative), historical research, and theoretical, essayistic, and practical pieces.

Submission Guidelines

Please check the *WPA* website for complete submissions guidelines and to download the required coversheet. In general, submissions should:

- be a maximum 7,500 words;
- be styled according to either the *MLA Handbook* (8th edition) or the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th edition), as appropriate to the nature of your research;
- include an abstract (maximum 200 words);

- contain no identifying information;
- be submitted as a .doc or .docx format file; and
- use tables, notes, figures, and appendices sparingly and judiciously.

Submissions that do not follow these guidelines or that are missing the cover page will be returned to authors before review.

Reviews

WPA:Writing Program Administration publishes both review essays of multiple books and reviews of individual books related to writing programs and their administration. If you are interested in reviewing texts or recommending books for possible review, please contact the book review editor at wpabookreviews@gmail.com.

Announcements and Calls

Relevant announcements and calls for papers may be published as space permits. Announcements should not exceed 500 words, and calls for proposals or participation should not exceed 1,000 words. Submission deadlines in calls should be no sooner than January 1 for the fall issue and June 1 for the spring issue. Please email your calls and announcements to wpaeditors@gmail.com and include the text in both the body of the message and as a .doc or .docx attachment.

Correspondence

Correspondence relating to the journal, submissions, or editorial issues should be sent to wpaeditors@gmail.com.

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Writing
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Contents

Please Take Care

Lori Ostergaard, Jacob Babb, and Jim Nugent

> *We need an embodied discourse, one that interprets body as neither a passive* tabula rasa *on which meanings are inscribed nor an inescapable animal that must be subdued before pure knowing can be achieved.*
>
> —Kristie S. Fleckenstein, "Writing Bodies: Somatic Mind in Composition Studies" (281)

In her introduction to *College English*'s recent special issue on scholarly editing, Melissa Ianetta writes about the effect an illness had on her work with the journal. Specifically, she describes

> one of the many unseen relationships in editing: that between the body of the editor and the body of a journal. That is, editors are often invisible figures in the scholarship of our field, rarely discernible in our scholarly conversation. When they do appear, it's often as a disembodied spirit . . . (267)

As editors, our own attempts to remain disembodied and invisible have admittedly failed; our physical and psychic selves have recently made themselves stubbornly apparent. Like Ianetta, we have been reminded that bodies of scholarship (like *WPA*) and professional bodies (like CWPA) are constituted by an interconnected network of quite literal bodies—bodies that are susceptible in all the usual ways.

In the course of a few weeks, the three of us experienced a sprained ankle, a house fire, a broken leg, and a surgery. One of the editors has been working through depression and another through anxiety. All of us are dealing with the fatigue and frustration that attends our work as teachers, scholars, administrators, and editors and that affects our (attempted) lives beyond such work. We write this introduction for a scholarly community of WPAs, knowing that our readers, writers, and reviewers are experienc-

ing varying levels of stress and exhaustion—but hopefully, too, the pride and exhilaration that comes with work well done. A recent tragedy, however, makes us especially mindful of the need to share with one another the hardships we face in our professional and personal lives.

On September 16, Katie McWain, an assistant professor and WPA at Texas Woman's University, took her life. Katie was one of the first assistant editors to work with us on the journal. We do not pretend to understand Katie's struggles with the disease of depression, but her death has profoundly affected all who knew her. We feel keenly the loss of this promising young scholar and administrator. We are pained by the loss of a future marveling at Katie's accomplishments, catching up with her at the annual WPA breakfast, and witnessing her broadening influence in the field. We grieve the loss of someone who entered our lives only too briefly, but who left us indelibly changed.

To honor Katie and acknowledge her passing, we asked a few of her friends and collaborators to share words in celebration of her life.

> *After learning of Katie's death, I wrote to my colleague Rachel to share how important her mentorship was to Katie. She assured me she already knew: "Katie was generous with her appreciation." Indeed, generosity was Katie's way of being. In her classroom, she ensured each student felt invited to speak. In her brilliant dissertation on teacher preparation, she treated her subjects with graciousness and care. In our department, she served in order to better the community, to improve how we live and work together. We have lost a bright light.*
>
> —Shari Stenberg, University of Nebraska–Lincoln

> *It's hard for me to separate the work Katie and I did together from our friendship because, for me, our work was an extension of our friendship. She brought the same comforting and encouraging spirit to both so I never felt like I let her down when I didn't get my drafting done or forgot to read something. Toiling away on the fourth draft of a manuscript just felt like hanging out with my friend because she'd make a joke and laugh because she knew it wasn't funny, which made it funny so I'd laugh, and we'd forget what we were doing. Katie made it so easy to love her, which is why so many feel the loss so deeply.*
>
> —Marcus Meade, University of Virginia

I find myself still reaching for my phone to text Katie. She and I were gWPAs together, and in our first faculty jobs we talked almost daily about the difficult, mundane, and sometimes absurd aspects of being junior-faculty WPAs. Katie was the type of friend and colleague who eagerly listened, offered perspectives, and shared resources. She believed in acknowledging the relational and emotional aspects of this work, in celebrating joy and accomplishment, and in making sure others knew they weren't alone in their experiences of frustration and disappointment. She was brilliant and kind and funny. I miss her dearly.

—Zachary Beare, North Carolina State University

Katie and I met through our work as assistant editors for WPA. Our collaboration quickly blossomed into a wonderful peer mentorship and friendship. My favorite memories of Katie are when we sat out in the sun in Pittsburgh after our Cs presentation to celebrate and when we had dinner together at the CWPA conference in Baltimore this summer, where she offered me all her job market wisdom. Katie's camaraderie has demonstrated what it means to be a supportive and compassionate person and WPA, and I will never forget that.

—Molly Ubbesen, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee

Katie was more than just a brilliant scholar and administrator. For me, her legacy lives in 100,000 moments and memories. She was a graduate student who kept a community literacy organization afloat, spending her afternoons devising literacy activities for a group of recalcitrant youth in the juvenile justice system. She was a scholar who could write a compelling critical theory blog post about The Bachelor in the morning and spend her afternoon melding her writing with yours on a conference proposal. She was the kind of friend who knew you better than you know yourself. Ultimately, the best way to honor Katie's memory is to earnestly remind a friend or colleague that, in spite of what they hear in the world or in this profession, they are working hard enough, trying hard enough, doing enough: we are all simply enough.

—Nicole E. Green, University of Nebraska–Lincoln

These words remind us of everything we valued about our work with Katie when she was an assistant editor for the journal. We find it difficult to articulate our sense of loss, and we know that is true of many who have felt the impact of her passing. We thank everyone who contributed these thoughts and memories about Katie. She will be missed.

As we think about the challenges of being embodied in professional and discursive roles that demand we pretend otherwise, we are grateful for the field's growing attention to emotional labor and affect. And we especially appreciate the good work presented by many WPAs this past July as part of the self-care strand at the CWPA conference in Baltimore. As we all continue to heal and rebuild, we remain mindful that everyone involved in the production of this journal and everyone who reads it are human beings who sometimes need to reach out for help or to offer help to others. We may be united through our investment in program administration, but our real strength lies in the very human support that we offer to one another. Please take care, friends.

Acknowledgments

We close this introduction by acknowledging the contributions of our editorial board and our assistant editors. We are pleased to welcome Collie Fulford and Teresa Grettano to the editorial board. We look forward to the journal benefitting from their insight in the coming years. We are also pleased to officially make David Blakesley a member of the editorial board; his work on the production side of the journal has been invaluable for many years, and we wanted to add him to the board both to recognize his important contributions and to draw on his wisdom and experience.

With this issue we pause to thank our outgoing assistant editors, Amy Cicchino and Kelly Moreland. We are grateful to these two amazing scholars for their contributions to the journal over the past year. In turn, we are delighted to welcome Rebecca Pettiti and Katelyn Stark, who join Kendra Andrews to round out our team of assistant editors for 2019–20. We're also excited to welcome Eric D. Brown as our new advertising manager. We appreciate the contributions these team members have made to this issue of the journal, and we look forward to a productive and exciting year working with them.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the assistance of our undergraduate editorial assistants who worked with us to bring this issue to production: Elizabeth Bihary, Rachel Esarey, and Jaclyn Tockstein. It is an honor to mentor these students and offer them the opportunity to gain some important professional experience.

To all who subscribe and read the journal, we thank you for your continued support. We close by inviting you to join CWPA if you haven't yet done so, or to renew your membership at http://www.wpacouncil.org/aws/CWPA/pt/sp/Join.

Works Cited

Fleckenstein, Kristie S. "Writing Bodies: Somatic Mind in Composition Studies." *College English*, vol. 61, no. 3, 1999, pp. 281–306.

Ianetta, Melissa. "From the Editor." Special Issue Scholarly Editing: History, Performance Future." *College English*, vol. 81, no. 4, 2019, pp. 267–72.

Plenary Panel

Sustainable Becomings: Women's Career Trajectories in Writing Program Administration

Louise Wetherbee Phelps, Sheila Carter-Tod, Jessie L. Moore, Patti Poblete, Casey Reid, and Sarah Elizabeth Snyder

Adapting talks from a July 2019 CWPA plenary panel on women's experiences in WPA careers, this article explores the sustainable becomings of five women whose career trajectories have included writing program administration. While these five stories cannot represent all women's career trajectories, they illustrate the need for attention to sustainability via self-care, deep mentoring, and a call for systemic change.

Louise Wetherbee Phelps: Chair's Introduction

Over a 40-year career, Louise Wetherbee Phelps has consulted, taught, and written extensively on writing program administration. Her WPA roles include directing a writing center (pre-PhD) and serving as founding director of the Syracuse Writing Program (now Department of Writing Studies, Rhetoric, and Composition). Post-retirement, she is scholar-in-residence in rhetoric and writing at Old Dominion University, working with doctoral students and the profession to support lifespan career development and promote cross-generational relationships.

This article adapts talks from a panel on women's experiences in WPA careers presented at the CWPA annual conference in July 2019. CWPA president Mark Blaauw-Hara's invitation to explore this topic was inspired by a fiery conversation on the WPA-L listserv initiated by Michelle LaFrance's rebuke of "mansplaining," in which many participants revealed

experiences of being silenced and disrespected as women faculty and WPAs and eloquently called out these behaviors as systemic discrimination. The authors of this article formed a multigenerational panel of women representing diverse backgrounds, institutions, life experiences, and moments in a career trajectory. Our panel also included as respondents Joe Janangelo, Katherine Daily O'Meara, and Lori Ostergaard, who focused attention on how the social worlds of the discipline, profession, and CWPA collective can proactively help sustain the long-term careers of women WPAs as highly individuated becomings, in all our complex diversity. Our conclusion returns to that question, informed by their insights and audience discussion.

In planning this panel and assembling its speakers and respondents, Mark and I recognized that women's experiences as faculty and leaders are distinctive in the WPA world for many reasons:

- the number of women who take these roles;
- the number of women who serve as WPAs without title, rank, salary, or release time appropriate to their work (e.g., as graduate students, "coordinators," committee chairs, non-tenure-track faculty or staff), especially in institutions other than research universities;
- the nontraditional career patterns and complex relations between personal and professional lives of many women academics; and
- the ways intersectionalities of gender with race and ethnicity, class, ability, age, and other facets of identity affect women WPAs.

Paradoxically, having brought them together based on the commonality of serving as women WPAs, we asked panelists to dramatize their own historical "becoming" in unique life trajectories of work and growth. We invited them to tell a story about an experience—a moment, event, text, person—that was decisive or transformational in shaping their own careers, focusing especially on their agency in these situations—how empowered or constrained their choices were, systemically or through personal circumstances.

The concepts of becoming and a career trajectory in our title are drawn from Paul Prior's work on lifespan literacy and disciplinary enculturation. He imagines each person engaging in a lifelong process of becoming, creating a unique trajectory of participation through multiple activity systems with their associated roles and identities. The idea of trajectory embodies both people's immersion in the social world and the uniqueness and agency of each individual—in this case, as an academic and a WPA: as people "agentively orient to and appropriate cultural resources," they are "also individuated in an on-going trajectory of becoming, as their situated

appropriations historically accumulate to form a particular person-in-process" (Prior).

Why "sustainable" becoming? My work on a cross-generational task force and on late career and post-retirement phases, as well as lifespan literacy, led me to organize a cross-generational workshop on reimagining and navigating our careers from a lifetime perspective. Many academics can expect a career of 40 years or more that will at least include WPA roles and perhaps further administrative roles, but also potentially major life shifts both in and outside the academy. My own academic and WPA career has now extended 46 years from pre-doctorate to post-retirement, and is still continuing. In the workshop we tried to heighten awareness of this lifespan career trajectory and the need for individuals to plan for it and the profession to support all phases of it. We urged participants to take into account how career trajectories and disciplinary belonging, like literacy development, are not separate from all their other laminated identities and activity systems, in ways the traditional tenure-driven notion of academic progress tends to deny and even obstruct.

To frame these reflections, we offered speakers some concepts from that workshop for examining any particular experience from an empowering perspective that integrates past, present, and future. They come from an article by Kelly Myers reinterpreting the Greek concept of *metanoia*, which she puts in dialogue with kairos and *pronoia*. Metanoia involves looking back at past decisions or turning points to reflect on them and learn from them, including mistakes, regrets, lost opportunities. Each disappointment or setback is also a new opportunity for seizing kairos—for moving in new directions.

> When *kairos* and *metanoia* are approached as a learning process, *kairos* expands beyond the single, crucial moment of opportunity and into a longer view of human experience [where] *kairos* can be seen as a series of opportunities occurring over time, experienced with a range of exhilaration and regret. . . . *Metanoia* . . . calls for a larger process of re-vision in which a person is constantly revising and revitalizing understanding. (11)

Pronoia adds the dimension of foresight, forethought, planning, to support "strategic navigation" through the triumphs, disappointments, and unexpected turns in a career trajectory.

Sheila Carter-Tod: Womanist Career Identity Integration as WPA

Sheila Carter-Tod is an associate professor of rhetoric and writing in the department of English at Virginia Tech. She was an associate director of composition for four years (pre-tenure) and director of composition for three years (post-tenure). After being WPA, she directed a college access program at Virginia Tech.

Early in my career, I wrote an article that used racial identity development theory (Berry; Cross, "Negro-to-Black"; Cross, *Shades of Black*) to explain the ways in which my children began to understand and (more importantly) talk about themselves in relation to others. When asked to think about how the profession of writing program administration has shaped my individual trajectory, of becoming through multiple contexts, experiences, and identities, I was immediately drawn back to reconsider this theoretical framework. As I reflected on the process, and revisited the research, I clearly began to see how the stages of ethnic racial identity models (an expansion of the previous theory) better described/mapped onto my career trajectory and the ways in which I created and recreated my own professional identity(ies). It is important to stop here and interject a little about who I am. I am a first-generation, African-American female, raised in the South, in what would be characterized as a lower socio-economic environment. I jokingly say that I am the product of every governmental educational experiment—from busing to tracking to grade-level merged classrooms. While I wasn't expected to go to college, I did—attending a PWI for both undergraduate and graduate school. Throughout the process, there was a lot that I did not know, and I encountered very few people that looked like me. I am also headstrong and tenacious enough to believe I could and can enact change. Ultimately, I went into higher education to find a way to change the experience for people like me. I wanted to create access to and through education by demystifying power structures—specifically as they are established and reinforced by barriers based on language usage—reading, writing and speaking.

By explaining the stages of ethnic racial identity theory in respect to my own stories, I will describe how my career trajectory has been a precarious balancing of defining who I am, within the existing structures of the academy, while pushing to expand academic and administrative structures in order to create venues of access.

Stage One: Assimilation

In this stage, the individual identifies strictly with the dominant culture and abandons his or her own. I can distinctly remember sitting in a pre-tenure mentoring meeting with my committee (made up of four people—only one of whom had a writing studies background), and after barely being able to speak at all, being told they were concerned that the work that I was doing on "student rights to their own language" was based on a statement that was thirty years old. This concept "concerned" them because it did not reflect well on my proposed research agenda and career trajectory. I also remembered being absolutely panicked—feeling like I needed to take immediate action to create a "real research agenda" that looked like what would make the mentoring committee (and by extension my department and university) happy and make me a "real scholar."

At that time, I truly believed that my career success and the grounds for a successful career trajectory was based on factors outside of who I was and what I felt was important to study. I strongly believed that the only way to succeed was to assimilate to the expectations of the institutional understanding of what was worth researching in order to be deemed a scholar.

Stage Two: Marginalization

In this stage, the individual conjures her own identity separate from the dominant one. After submitting my package to be reviewed for tenure I can remember spending a lot of time embracing my perceived marginalization. This often meant working on initiatives outside of my department and associating with others on campus that shared my values. I chaired our faculty and staff black caucus, worked on the commission of equal opportunity and diversity and created an academic persona that was separate, both from my department and my discipline. It was within these, often perceived, marginalized spaces that I found myself, and my career goals most aligned.

Stage Three: Separation

In this stage an individual identifies with those like her with no regard to the dominant culture. This stage was my turn towards the discipline and seeking out colleagues therein. This meant finding like-minded folks in WPA and specific parts of CCCC, as well as setting about creating separate and supported spaces for myself and people associated with the composition program.

Stage Four Integration

This is the stage in which I currently see my career and professional identity. However, I would need to merge this stage to embrace some of my own personal intersectionality as an African American female and would instead call this stage "Womanist Identity Integration." This more inclusive term has been used before and others have explored womanist identity as the intersectionality of race and gender (e.g., Pope-Davis and Coleman; Heath; Jackson).

In this stage an individual identifies with her own identity, as well as understands infusion of the identity of the dominant cultural and seeks to create a more integrated holistic identity. Moving from acknowledging and conforming to existing social expectations to creating and defining her own strong, healthy inclusive ones. (This is where I am now and it involves balancing external needs with internal well-being.)

My story is just that, "my story"; however, what I think are possible takeaways are the following:

1. Our journeys, while unique to us, also when explored together often reveal emerging patterns or ranges of re-occurring components

2. Thinking about and through those patterns helps to provide us with some reflective agency over where we are and our trajectory forward

3. All career trajectories involve a constant balancing. Because of the intersectionality of us all, functioning in an institutional setting imposes challenges to individualities. Understanding and accepting this concept—no matter where you are in your career—provides you with time to decide your own personal and professional goals and boundaries.

Jessie L. Moore: Whirlwinds, (Administrative) Promotions, and Mentoring

Jessie L. Moore is director of the Center for Engaged Learning and professor of English and professional writing and rhetoric at Elon University. She coordinated Elon's first-year writing program for six years and the professional writing and rhetoric concentration (now major) for seven years. She now coordinates international, multi-institutional research seminars on engaged learning topics,

including writing transfer. She co-led the CWPA summer workshop for two years.

In 2015 and 2016, as an associate professor and associate director of Elon's Center for Engaged Learning, I experienced a personal and professional whirlwind that led to more self-advocacy and to ongoing reflection about the mentored experiences of female administrators. My experiences are not unique, but we typically do not make them visible, so one of my goals is to normalize talking about them as we mentor sustainable careers in administration.

Among seven committee assignments in spring 2015, I served on an implementation and assessment committee for an LGBTQIA inclusion task force and wrapped up my term as chair of the university-wide promotions and tenure committee. I highlight these two contributions to the life of my university because they inform my identity in ongoing ways.

After giving a final exam on a Friday, I passed out and was taken to the ER where the attending physician ordered a CAT scan because I had hit my head but directed me to see my OB-GYN the following Monday to address the underlying cause of why I had passed out: heavy, ongoing bleeding caused by fibroids. According to the National Institutes of Health, "One study found that, by age 50, 70 percent of whites and 80 percent of African Americans had fibroids," but many women do not experience symptoms.

Less than 36 hours after my first ER visit, I hemorrhaged. Normal hemoglobin levels for women tend to be in the range of 12–15 grams per deciliter. My hemoglobin level was 4.9 grams per deciliter. Over the course of the summer, I coordinated two, week-long, multi-institutional research seminar meetings and participated in a multi-day think tank. I also had outpatient surgery; was prescribed an experimental, off-label medicine that caused temporary, premature menopause; and was admitted to the hospital for additional blood transfusions (five in total). (Thank you, blood donors!) Ultimately, in August 2015, I became one of the 200,000 women each year who have a hysterectomy due to fibroids, contributing to more than $5.89 billion in annual health care costs related to uterine fibroids (Cardozo, et al.). I edited *Critical Transitions* and *Understanding Writing Transfer* from hospital beds. I also sold a house and bought a house closer to campus to make long summer days associated with administering my center more sustainable.

In September 2015, I turned in my application for promotion to full professor. In February 2016, I learned a split committee had not supported my application, and the provost opted not to challenge the committee's recommendation. Seeking feedback through formal channels, I received

contradictory feedback regarding why my application was unsuccessful. One week later, I traveled to conduct a video interview for a book project by my direct report and the university president. Since 2012, I have conducted hundreds of video interviews for my center, but compartmentalizing my hurt and anger so that I could represent the university professionally made conducting and editing that video exceptionally difficult. It didn't help that the interview subject expressed doubt about my ability to collect sufficient interview footage because he thought someone my (undisclosed-to-him) age would not have enough familiarity with related scholarship to ask appropriate questions. To his credit, he had the grace to apologize later. Still, I wonder if he would have expressed similar doubt to a male scholar.

One month later, the North Carolina legislature passed the infamous bathroom bill, leading to calls to boycott the 2016 CWPA conference in Raleigh, for which I was a local host, and the center's own summer conference on mentored undergraduate research. Two months later, the provost directed me—as a former promotions and tenure committee chair—to work with the university's legal counsel on affidavits related to a lawsuit against the university for an unsuccessful promotion and tenure case. I stopped tracking hours after logging 40 hours of summer work in support of the university's defense.

Throughout my career, including during this whirlwind, I have counted my direct report and a senior administrator among my mentors. They counseled me to wait to seek promotion to director until after I had been promoted to full, worried that the faculty promotions and tenure committee would read me as too much of an administrator. In 2016, though, following this whirlwind, I advocated for my administrative promotion, tired of contending with misconceptions of my role as Associate director, when I led everything from strategic planning to budgeting to assessment. My mentors spearheaded my administrative promotion—never formally announced—from associate director to director of the center. My faculty line and teaching load remained the same. I continued to work a 12-month contract, with no formal vacation policy.

In the years that followed, I persevered and reapplied for promotion to full—successfully this time—and earlier this year, my line was converted to administrative staff with faculty rank, with the same teaching load, but with more flexibility regarding when I teach—and with a formal vacation policy.

I love my job. I also appreciate my mentors. But metanoia's reflectivity prompts questions that I hope will guide my mentoring experiences:

- How might mentors co-advocate for job titles that better represent administrative labor?
- What contextually specific strategies might emerging—or becoming—administrators use to document their dual identities as faculty and administrators in ways that do not compromise promotions in either realm?
- How might mentors use their own encounters with institutional red tape to smooth the road for those who follow?
- How might mentors gauge when mentees need protection versus when they need cheerleaders supporting their leaps and strategic risk-taking?
- How might mentors be attentive to the whole person? My mentors' spouses offered tremendous support during my medical emergency. Mentoring necessitates attention to social and emotional support, in addition to other dimensions (Johnson). As a single administrator, how might I partner with co-mentors and mentoring networks to better attend to the whole person in my own mentoring practices?

The best mentoring relationships are reciprocal (Johnson), so while I continue to appreciate the mentoring I receive, I hope I am pushing my mentors' conceptions – and remaining attentive to how I might mentor those who follow.

Patti Poblete: Tanks, DPS Players, and Healers in WPA Work

Patti Poblete (poh-BLEH-teh) is a tenure-track assistant professor of English and writing program administrator at Henderson State University (HSU). Prior to her work at HSU, Patti served as assistant director of Iowa State University's Writing and Media Center. Patti has also acted as the assistant registrar of La Sierra University, where she took a deep dive into the bureaucratic side of university administration. She has been teaching at the college level for fifteen years.

All four of my grandparents were teachers, three at the university level. A few years back, I found out one of my grandmothers had been the registrar of Philippine Union College (now the Adventist University of the Philippines), in addition to being an English professor. I found this out when I became first a curriculum evaluator, then the Assistant Registrar of La Sierra University, while also collecting my Master's degree in English. If you ask my family, the previous iteration of my career was inevitable. It

was genetics, or maybe fate, depending on the kind of university to which you've subscribed.

But instead, I'm here. The thing that's important to remember is that I started teaching at the same time I was in university administration. I was figuring out what pedagogy was while also negotiating with senior faculty about why, exactly, they couldn't randomly change their course descriptions every semester. (My boss shot down my proposal to have classroom allocation determined by paintball tournament, but that's a whole other thing.) I was on committees where folks debated about articulation and degree requirements, and I had *so many opinions*. But I was there as the records person, not faculty. I couldn't contribute to the discussion about whether a creative writing course could count as a writing-intensive disciplinary course because I was the friendly face in the corner making database notes. (I made a lot of faces, too, but that's harder to put in the minutes.)

After working in the registrar's office for four years, I was having a sit-down with the registrar about auditing seniors for graduation approval when she paused. "You know," she said, "I'm going to retire in a few years." She raised her eyebrows. "You could do this job."

And that is when I knew: I had to get out.

The next two years are a blur: I figured I needed one of those fancy PhDs to achieve faculty status, but the programs closest to me were literature focused, and as much as I loved a deep discussion about how *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* paralleled the work of Kate Chopin, I knew that wasn't for me. I briefly considered moving back to my birthplace, Toronto (#WeTheNorth), and picking up a theatre degree, and as such, establishing myself as a English department utility player. But it turned out I had to know how to act, and well . . . I ended up fleeing the continent. Specifically, to a rural town in Poland, where I taught conversational English to students ranging from age five to age fifty-five. (Also, I lived in a forest that had actual boars living in it.) In my time as an expat, I also looked at pretty much all the doctoral English programs in the Southwest, and somehow stumbled upon a thing called writing program administration.

Bingo. The whole "getting into grad school" was a whole other thing, but suffice it to say, I made it, I got that gosh darn diploma, and now, here I am.

My colleagues have bogarted all the smart-sounding stuff, so I will use that as an excuse to talk about video games. Specifically, *World of Warcraft*. Specifically, dungeon crawls, which happen when five players team up to accomplish a specific task in a contained location (hence, dungeon). That team is composed of one tank, three DPS (meaning damage per second)

players, and one healer. And that's where I return to WPAs because we love our metaphors, don't we?

I would argue that, to have a successful writing program, you need to know how to fill all three of those roles—either switching from type to type yourself or by pulling together a crack team of specialists.

1. **Tank.** The tank is the leader of the group. They're meant to do two things: lead the way and draw enemy fire. While the team might have a good sense of what they'll be doing, the tank is responsible for guiding them efficiently through the maze and helping avoid major obstacles and mobs. And, in the event that an enemy mob can't be avoided, the tank makes sure to stand in front and take the damage to protect the rest of the team. (Think *Wonder Woman*'s battlefield scene, when Diana gets all the enemy soldiers to fire at her so the rest of the unit can make it to the village.)

2. **DPS.** The players that do damage are the fighters—while the tank pulls most of the attention, DPS players slip in and do the specialized precision work. They get dirty and get the work done.

3. **Healer.** The title is self-explanatory, but the task is complicated. The healer isn't just there to repair wounds when the other players fall back—the healer is expected to keep her attention on all the players, the entire time, to make sure nobody's health or energy is flagging too much. That is, essentially, keeping her eyes in four different places at once, plus trying to avoid getting into trouble herself. Without the healer, the team doesn't get past the first blockade.

(I will note the inherent problem of using a battle metaphor to describe our work, but think of us as fighting, like, illiteracy and injustice.) Tank, DPS, and healer. We have to do all those things, all the time, for all the people, and that's pretty tiring, isn't it? So how do we sustain ourselves, long-term, if these are the roles we have to play?

It's five players. It's a team. Get yourself a team, on campus, off campus, here at this conference, and at home. The thing I have loved most about this community is how much we want to support each other.

So here we are: reaching out. We're on your team.

Casey Reid: Mid-Career Data, Kairotic Presentations, and Trauma-Informed Care

Casey Reid is pursuing her PhD in English at Old Dominion University while directing academic and tutoring services and the writing center at Lane Community College. Previously, she was English faculty, college orientation coordinator, and director of academic success at Metropolitan Community College in Kansas City; director of developmental education programs at East Central College; and supplemental instruction coordinator at the University of Central Missouri.

As I have started to experience the reverberations of being identified as middle-aged and started to identify as mid-career, I've taken a data-informed approach to my process of metanoia. Here is some of that data: over 6,000 students with whom I have directly connected; twenty years since I first stepped into a writing center; seventeen years teaching with fifteen in community colleges; nine years of administrative work; 300–350 people supervised; six institutions where I've worked with four being in the last five years; gallons of bad orange juice at conferences; three female supervisors early in my career and several others scattered throughout who have been fantastic mentors—two of whom were removed or forced to resign from their positions; one female supervisor who I thought had ruined my career and my professional sense of self-efficacy and agency; eight moves in the last five years with and without three significant others; two times someone almost ended my life in one week with one being by a former partner of eleven years; one family that disowned me eighteen years ago as I traversed my last year as an undergraduate as a first-generation, low-income, rural-raised college student; one dissertation chair and one PhD bestie and one partner who are helping me get through my third attempt at doctoral study; two surrogate moms, one best friend, and one sister who get me through everything.

I bring this cherry-picked data and associated experiences to my work teaching and directing student support programs. When I began working at my current institution three years ago, I quickly recognized that I was entering yet another traumatized higher education environment with students and colleagues who had been traumatized by events in their personal and professional lives; various facets of institutional culture; and the systemic social, cultural, and economic forces that traumatize different groups within society. As my personal and professional traumas have accumulated and as I have read the accumulating publications about bullying, toxic work

environments, and the rapid pace of change in higher education (see Lester; Adams Wooten, Babb, and Ray; and Elder and Davila for examples), I have sought scholarship to cope.

At the 2019 national TYCA Conference, I found solace when I attended Claudia Moreno Parsons, Elissa Carrot, Jose Maldonado, and Renee Scariano Willers's presentation about infusing trauma-informed practices into first-year writing classes. My attendance was an accident of space: nervous that I would have problems with my video conferencing software, I went to my presentation room two hours early, where I met Parsons, Carrot, Maldonado, and Willers as part of a group of presentations labeled "Emotional Labor and Teaching College Writing." There, I learned over half of people in the U.S. report experiencing a minimum of one traumatic event in their lives (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration 8). Practitioners and scholars of trauma also talk more broadly about collective traumas, including racial trauma, trauma from experiencing wars and natural disasters, and more (267–69). The college years, especially the first year, represent a time when individuals are highly likely to experience what are known as "potentially traumatizing events (PTEs)" (Davidson 5). As part of this burgeoning understanding of the widespread impact of trauma, a growing array of researchers and practitioners are studying and educating people about trauma-informed care and trauma-informed practices across various domains (3).

This kairotic conference experience resulted in me bringing information about trauma-informed practice back to my staff, who started researching, took a class about trauma-informed work, and began educating the writing center staff about trauma-informed care (TIC):

> a strengths-based framework that is grounded in an understanding of and responsiveness to the impact of trauma, that emphasizes physical, psychological, and emotional safety for both providers and survivors, and that creates opportunities for survivors to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment. (Hopper, Bassuk, and Olivet 133)

We are using TIC to engage the campus community, reframe academic support, and re-envision our work to be a trauma-informed program. Learning to think and respond using the lens of TIC is helping me reconceptualize my work within myself as a person and also as a teacher-scholar and administrator; it has become essential to my trajectory of sustainable becoming—regardless of my professional roles.

Sarah Elizabeth Snyder: On Sustainably Becoming a WPA

Sarah Elizabeth Snyder is a non-tenure-track professor of English and writing program administrator of FYC and WAC/WID at Arizona Western College. She also serves as Institute Director for the Symposium on Second Language Writing and chair of the CWPA Conference Siting Committee. Sarah created the "Breakfast Buddies" mentoring program for WPA-GO in 2013 and served the graduate organization from 2012 to 2018.

I cannot yet say that I have fully established a sustainable career as a cis female WPA; however, I am currently in the "becoming" stage. I can say that I hope to have a sustainable career, and the following are the kairotic pronoia moments I have capitalized on and reflection in metanoia to do so. Despite my best intentions, I'm not sure how things will end up because we all know that life has a way of saying, "Hold my beer." This acceptance of the acute reality in life and in WPA that "the only constant is change" comes from my experiences as a GenAdmin WPA (Charlton et al.), a millennial, and a first-generation college graduate. The moment of "becoming" that I want to share is when I took a non-tenure-track WPA position at Arizona Western College last year.

To get to this moment, and true to the definition of "GenAdmin WPA" as my first lens**,** I created the identity of being a WPA as my career goal. Perhaps this was because my closest mentors described WPA work as challenging, satisfying, and pragmatic, but most importantly, they actively included and encouraged me. These defining mentoring moments showed me WPA work as a privilege and I sought a PhD program that allowed me to study both second language writing and writing program administration.

As Louise Wetherbee Phelps observes, many identities of WPAs before me have been shaped by the necessary acts of defining and legitimizing the field ("Identity Work"). Although many would argue this work is not yet (or might never be) finished, the product of this identity work has affected me and my career positively. In my PhD program, I had the opportunities to take WPA coursework, go to CWPA from 2012 to the present, hold multiple leadership and mentoring positions within WPA-GO, serve as a junior WPA with strong support and guidance for four years, and ultimately write my dissertation in the vein of a WPA-as-researcher project.

On the job market, I assured myself that if I didn't get a WPA job immediately, it was probably for the better, as cautionary tales about the political traps that are inherent in the work as an untenured WPA are plentiful (e.g., Enos and Borrowman; Horning and Dew). But, for better or for

worse, I took a WPA position directly out of my PhD. Of course, I didn't make this decision alone or lightly—I depended on my mentors. In my mind, this depth of mentorship is the most important and valued characteristic of our field for the sustainability of our community and its members.

The second lens that I see my "sustainable becoming" through is that of my generation. Although I grew up without the internet or cell phones, I am still considered an old millennial, or a Xennial. I have made a few choices that could be said to embody this generation: having fuzzy babies, an extended work/travel experience to Japan teaching English, getting married later in life, structuring a life around paying student debt, and loving avocado toast.

I also have a different sense of career security as a millennial. Against the expectations of many PhD programs, I conceived pragmatic goals for employment. The MLA-sponsored Alternative Academic (Alt-Ac) program helped PhD students at my institution explore careers outside of academia and opened my eyes to the opportunities within community colleges for research and administration.

During the economic recession, I saw too many people who had invested and trusted in academia be forced to painfully reinvent themselves because of variables beyond their control. As such, the importance of flexibility in my career was central to my thinking and working toward tenure and the sacrifices that I would have to make to achieve it seemed to counter other goals that I had at the time. I always had plans B, C, D, and Z in mind, but because the conditions seemed right, I agentively chose to be a WPA and professor at a non-tenure-track institution.

This move signals some important choices that I made. I can still have administrative responsibilities, do research, and teach without having a tenure-track job. This is how I have created boundaries that are healthy for me between my place of employment and my identity. It is also in my home state of Arizona, a few hours away from my family, which allows me to support a sustainable family culture. All of these choices will hopefully allow me to continue the kinds of self-care that are needed for the difficult realities of our field described most recently in the *Composition Studies* mundane six-word poem "Where We Are":

> Email avalanche: committees, conferences, compositions, complaints. [. . .]
> Reviewer two: "Write a different article." [. . .]
> Mansplaining isn't really mansplaining, he mansplained. [. . .]
> Decision fatigue + cognitive overload = WPA life. [. . .]
> Classroom: refuge; grading: requisite; service: torture. [. . .]

> Self-care doesn't fix systemic contingent strife. [. . .]
> Doctorate degree = over educated, under employed. (Knoblauch et al. 175–77)

Until we can create a working environment that is sustainable in itself, self-care is vital to the reality we live in.

The third lens, being a first-generation college graduate, also plays a role in my understanding of my sustainable career trajectory and the student body that I serve. Perhaps that is why I found a calling in the community college system, especially one designated over 75% Hispanic-serving Institution, where two- and four-year degrees are financially attainable to a community whose median household combined income is less than $30,000 a year, and where students have the opportunity to stay close to their families while also pursuing their education. These students sustain my energy for teaching a 2/2 load, while also being responsible for the myriad writing initiatives at our institution.

I hope that through the intentionality of these moves, I can create my own version of a sustainable career trajectory as a cis female WPA. I consider myself at the beginning of my administrative career because we learn how to do the work by doing the work. Every day I prepare, learn, invent, and reinvent my own identity, which I think is the key to sustainability as a WPA.

Conclusion

One emerging theme in our narratives is that a sustainable career trajectory involves coming to realize, define, and enact personal and professional values in WPA work. The work WPAs do is so varied (by institution) and broad ranging (by situational need) that to do so without such values-based grounding is unsustainable.

Another crucial facet of sustainable becoming that emerged from the narratives involves caring for ourselves, or what has come to be called "self-care." As the role of bullying, burnout, compassion fatigue, emotional labor and other, formerly invisible facets of WPA labor has gained recognition (see Jacobs and Micciche; Elder and Davila; Emerson and Thomas), so, too, has scholarship providing insights and frameworks for taking care of ourselves throughout our career and life trajectory. As Sarah points out, "Until we can create a working environment that is sustainable in itself, self-care is vital to the reality we live in." One research-supported self-care strategy is to engage in mindfulness and meditative activities that can help develop the "reflective agency" Sheila mentions (Davidson 21). Boundary setting, another concept Sheila and Sarah touch upon, is another necessary

self-care strategy in part because of what Sheila calls the "constant balancing . . . [required of] functioning in an institutional setting" that includes the traumas and traumatized individuals that Casey mentions (Otto). Self-care often means making difficult decisions about how and what to prioritize while navigating inequitable systems under inequitable conditions. It may mean adding a stressor temporarily—like moving, as Jessie did—to decrease other stressors over a longer period. It also may mean making decisions with potentially long-term career implications—like Sarah did—in the hopes of being able to prioritize self-care, knowing these decisions may not always play out as we hope and may require the kind of U-turns and pivots that Patti and Casey have undertaken and that Peggy O'Neill describes as part of mid-career and midlife (177—78). As many scholars note, self-care is essential not only for the sustainability of educational practitioners as individuals but also for the students with whom they work: "by taking care of themselves first, they are in a better position to help their students" (Davidson 21). In short, prioritizing self-care allows WPAs to take on the healer role Patti describes because "It gives . . .more space to do the emotional labor of helping students . . . [and] to continue to do the work of advocating for students" (Otto).

Mentoring was also a theme in many of our career trajectories, albeit in different ways. In Sarah's narrative, her mentors inspired her to aim towards WPA as a career and support her through what are arguably the most challenging first years of becoming as a non-tenure track faculty member. In Jessie's narrative, her mentors played both gatekeeping and cheerleading functions during her tenure and promotion case, reducing her agency, and creating conflict between her scholarly examination of salient practices of mentoring and her own lived experiences with mentoring. Similarly, Sheila experienced a more insidious "mentoring" throughout her career, exposing the variable interpretations and actions of mentoring. Ironically similar to the refutation of the *Students' Right to Their Own Language* itself, this mentoring meant doing something for the good of someone else (e.g., teaching a dominant discourse to the neglect or devaluation of a non-dominant discourse), or protecting individuals from themselves by trying to encourage assimilation. As Sarah also mentioned, mentors in the form of edited collections (Enos and Borrowman; Horning and Dew) have brought to the surface the ugliness, the political strife, the danger, and the reward of WPA positions, and now there is considerable research on bullying in these positions as well (see Elder and Davila; Emerson and Thomas).

All these arrows point to something that everyone can know whether they have held a WPA position or not—these positions are incredibly challenging, and the need to commune and reinvigorate with others who are

familiar with the WPA situation is essential. This is where the CWPA community offers much in the way of support through the organization, the conference, the summer workshop, and mentoring programs such as "Breakfast Buddies" and "Mentors at Cs"; through WPA-Graduate Organization and the CWPA Executive Board; and through countless other opportunities. Borrowing a term from religious leadership literature, we know that "good leaders are developed in and through slow, deep mentoring. To think otherwise is to embrace the myth of the quick fix" (Reese and Loane). Echoing the refrain from much of our literature about the downsides of the "one-shot" nature of teaching assistant practica, scholarship on mentoring reiterates the value of multiple contact points for slow, deep mentoring—the forming of strong bonds, lighthearted cross-institutional mentoring, professional development, etc. (Johnson). These points can serve as self-care, reinvigoration, and sustainability, but sustainability connotes that reinvention and moving on can also be necessary, including moves out of WPA work or into broader administrative roles.

While the members of our mentoring constellations might change over time, as long as our careers continue to evolve, we benefit from (and can offer others) meaningful, deep mentoring across career stages. Cross-generational mentoring can become reciprocal over time, as our relationships with continuing members of our mentoring constellations evolve and our own career trajectories develop. At an organizational level, deep mentoring opportunities for mid-career professionals, like a CWPA Workshop 2.0, could support sustainability and self-care for individual members, our programs, and our field. At both institutional and organizational levels, women need agency in selecting their mentors; while assigned mentors may offer helpful guidance in discrete, task-specific contexts, mentoring relationships are more likely to evolve as reciprocal relationships with characteristics of deep mentoring when both mentor and mentee opt-in.

We call on the field to recognize that women's career trajectories include potentially recursive phases—as illustrated by Sheila's experiences—and that sustainability goals and mentoring needs vary at different points along the trajectory. As a result, we cannot offer an uncomplicated set of implications for WPAs and their mentors that perfectly fits every career stage and situation.

Across these phases, though, we argue that women's WPA careers are most sustainable when they have agency and support to construct a team, and team members likely will provide different types of support at different times, both in reverence to the WPA's "becoming" identity and in response to other team members' evolving strengths. As Patti illuminated, at times, female WPAs might take the role of healer; other times, they are the tank,

relying on others to assume the role of healer. Regardless, as scholarship about trauma-informed care reminds us, sustainable WPA trajectories should prioritize self-care.

Ultimately, what we can do for ourselves through self-care and mentoring is limited by institutional structures and cultures that don't afford sustainable becomings for individual WPAs and their program communities. Giving special attention here to those features of the academy that affect women WPAs, we call for individuals and collectives to advocate systemic changes that proactively foster sustainability, both on our campuses and in the profession. That means, for example, seeking changes in academic culture and structures to offer social support and flexibility for individuals to follow diverse, sometimes nontraditional career paths without penalty, including balancing personal and professional commitments. For individuals or groups who encounter obstacles, like health issues, bullying, or exploitation, it means pressing for systems and policies that ensure institutional responses are fair, compassionate, flexible, and equitable.

However diverse, the experiences within our small group can't begin to represent or speak for the range of women who identify and work as WPAs, so we end with these questions for the field:

- How do we make room for/include/discuss the women who have been excluded from or thrust into WPA roles and careers who may feel very little agency or who may be struggling to have agency within the confines of a trajectory that they did not choose or desire?
- How do we make space for/include individuals who do WPA work in non-WPA/othered roles, like two-year college faculty, contingent faculty, writing center practitioners, and other higher education personnel who are often doing invisible WPA labor?
- How do we provide some connecting threads across narratives in the most inclusive manner possible, given the range of experiences women may have as they do the work of helping administer a writing program for however long they may fulfill these responsibilities?
- How do we make sure that we honor what several of us did with the panel: make visible the varied facets of our lives as women which tend to remain hidden or obscured and that impact our work?

Acknowledgment

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Plenary

Intersections of Privilege and Access: Writing Programs, Disciplinary Knowledge, and the Shape of a Field

Joanne Baird Giordano and Holly Hassel

The issues we are interested in addressing in this plenary are focused on educational access, retention, and success of students, and the role that that writing programs—particularly first-year writing—play in what we see as the core work of our field. Briefly, we want to discuss our backgrounds to provide a context for our perspectives on privilege and access in higher education and in writing programs. We first met and worked together at the University of Wisconsin–Marathon County, an open-admissions, two-year campus in central Wisconsin. It was part of a larger institution (the University of Wisconsin Colleges) that was comprised of 13 small, two-year campuses and an online program spread across the state with a shared curriculum, academic departments, governance structure, and administration.

Our two-year institution was the third largest in the state in terms of student enrollment but received a disproportionately small percentage of state funding in comparison to other institutions, and the four-year comprehensives received less funding in comparison to the flagship university. Most of our two-year campuses served communities with low degree attainment rates. For the entire time that we worked in Wisconsin, our institution operated under financial constraints that shaped the teaching and learning environment for students and instructors in our writing program and limited the academic support that campuses provided. For example, there was no public funding for basic skills courses and tutoring, so tuition revenue from our developmental reading, writing, and ESL courses had to pay for themselves while also funding writing centers. Some of our campuses were unable to fund writing centers at all or provide peer tutoring guided by professionals with disciplinary expertise. All of our statewide academic departments together shared a single part-time administrative assis-

tant. We were used to making do with very few resources and completing tasks for ourselves that might be assigned to an administrative staff member at an institution with more resources. Despite these challenges, we were able to work with colleagues in our department to build a writing program that received national awards for program excellence from CCCC and the Two-Year College English Association.

Over the last decade, our already under-resourced institution faced a series of austerity measures that resulted in its demise. With the election of Governor Scott Walker and a state-level agenda constricting and consolidating higher education, a series of legislative efforts resulted in reductions to benefits and salary for public employees, stripped public unions of their legal recognition, and weakened tenure and shared governance. The Board of Regents introduced policies that permitted discontinuance of programs and faculty layoffs with largely economic rather than educational considerations. The University of Wisconsin System received a $250 million budget reduction in public funding (about 11% of the state system budget—significant but far less than the recently announced 41% cut to the University of Alaska System;—see Axelrod; Durhams; Johnson). These budget cuts were accompanied by years of tuition freezes, which meant that tuition-dependent two-year colleges were left with few options for making up the lost funding. For four-year institutions, the cuts resulted in a reduction in services, but they were still left with more resources than our instructors and students had before the cuts. The open-access campuses experienced a dramatic loss of already minimal services and staff positions—for example, reduced advising, elimination of in-person financial aid support, and cuts to curriculum that made it difficult for many students to complete general education requirements without taking online or distance education courses.

Subsequently, our campuses were left without a pathway toward a sustainable future. In 2017, the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* published the announcement before employees were notified that our statewide two-year institution would be dissolved and its campuses merged with adjacent four-year campuses (Herzog). Our institution's accreditation was resigned in July 2018 ("Public Discourse"). The four-year receiving institutions had higher admissions criteria, which meant that their writing programs weren't designed to support open-access education. They weren't prepared to put in place the placement, curriculum, instructional, and faculty mentoring practices required for creating sustainable writing programs to support students on campuses with no admissions standards—and some of the faculty were not interested in doing that kind of writing program development work. State system officials, the Board of Regents, the public, and some college

administrators neither acknowledged nor fully understood the teaching and learning that needs to take place at an open-admissions institution to provide students with equitable access to higher education.

As our institution was rapidly dismantled, we each made choices to seek new opportunities that would allow us to continue our work as teacher-scholars. Joanne now teaches at Salt Lake Community College and has stepped away from years of program administration work to return to full-time teaching. Holly teaches at North Dakota State University where she is transitioning to WPA responsibilities. Our new positions and previous experiences in Wisconsin have framed our perspectives on the topics of austerity (which Nancy Welch and Tony Scott addressed at the 2017 CWPA conference); on two-year college writing programs (as Carolyn Calhoon-Dillahunt spoke about at the 2011 conference); and about inequities and hierarchies in higher education that often distribute public resources unevenly in ways that disadvantage students who need the most support to succeed in college.

In this talk, we will examine issues of inclusion in writing programs by exploring access to higher education and postsecondary literacy instruction for students whose life experiences, social resources, and cultural capital have limited their opportunities for learning before they ever enroll in a college writing course. We will provide an overview of the diverse students who enroll in higher education and the varying types of writing programs that serve those students. We will explain some of the assumptions we make when approaching disciplinary questions in the field surrounding social justice and access to higher education, situating our discussion in the diverse needs of college writers. We will then provide an overview of reform movements and new directions that are reshaping writing programs at open-access two-year colleges and less selective universities in ways that can reduce inequities but that also have the potential both to limit access to higher education and to move decisions about curriculum and instruction away from members of our profession. We conclude with a discussion of issues and questions that we might address as a discipline to create equitable access to higher education for students whose lives, literacy experiences, and pathways through college are often fundamentally different from those of students who meet selective admissions standards.

In other words, we invite you to imagine what it means to design writing programs and classrooms that are not built on the mythical norm of college students—for example, that they are 18, that they are white, that they live on campus, that they have few extra-academic responsibilities, that they have consistent access to food and a warm place to live. We ask you to think about who students are across all sites of college writing. We

invite you to consider how to engage in writing program change work to support social justice not in the abstract but through work that creates more equitable learning environments for the students in your programs and in your classrooms.

Who Are Students and What Is First-Year Writing?

Before we establish the foundations for our assumptions about what college is for and how writing programs can support a mission of college access, it's important to understand the demographic realities of what Elaine Maimon has called the "new majority" of college students today. The "typical," but mythical, college student begins postsecondary education right after high school, attends a research university, relocates for college and spends the first year in on-campus housing, and goes to school full time. This norm might still exist at some types of institutions, but the realities of who today's college students are is quite different for most of us. Recent higher education research from the Pew Research Center, Higher Learning Advocates (HLA), and the federal government illustrates the diversity of college undergraduates in the United States in the last two decades:

- The share of students who are in poverty has increased (Fry and Cilluffo).
- The proportion of college students who are students of color has increased throughout higher education (Fry and Cilluffo).
- Just over half (55%) of students are financially independent, but a greater percentage of self-supporting students live in poverty ("National Survey Results").
- Fewer students attend two-year colleges than 20 years ago, but the students who do attend two-year schools are more likely to be low-income and to be students of color (Fry and Cilluffo).
- Greater numbers of veterans and students of color attend for-profit institutions (Fry and Cilluffo).
- Only 13% of first-year students live on campus ("National Survey Results").
- Most students (58%) work while going to school: of these, 40% work more than 30 hours a week, and about 25% work full time ("National Survey Results").
- About one in three college students (34%) are the first in their family to attend a higher education institution ("National Survey Results").
- About a quarter of students (26%) are parents ("National Survey Results").

- Two in five students (40%) are older than 25 ("National Survey Results").
- Almost two in five students (39%) attend part-time ("National Survey Results").
- Only about one-third of students at public institutions finish a bachelor's degree in four years (National Center for Education Statistics).

Given the diverse range of experiences and material conditions of today's new majority of college students, we invite you to reflect on your own assumptions about student writers and what first-year writing is. For example, when we say *first-year writing*, we don't necessarily mean one semester or even two semesters of courses. This may differ from some of the prevailing models at flagship, highly selective, or private liberal arts universities where many well-prepared students come with AP or dual enrollment credits, test out of a writing requirement, or enroll in interdisciplinary or seminar course model for their first semester writing course (Hassel and Giordano). For the average student at a community college or a less-selective comprehensive institution, first-year writing is at least two courses, and for some students takes place over more than one year, particularly given the breaks in enrollment that many self-supporting students take between semesters.

Writing programs at open-access institutions offer courses that are different from first-year writing at selective research campuses in terms of their purpose and the learning that students need to do (often over multiple semesters) to prepare for and enroll in a degree requirement fulfilling research-based writing course, which is the starting point for "first-year" writing at many R1 institutions. Sometimes programs emerge from adult basic education or have different departments for learning support, academic skills, and basic writing courses that operate entirely separately from English or humanities programs. Sometimes faculty have input into how students are placed into writing courses, and sometimes they have none at all. Sometimes students have been away from school for three, five, ten, or twenty years, and they are unsure about whether college is for them.

For writing programs at two-year colleges and increasingly at less-selective regional comprehensives, all faculty regardless of background and disciplinary training teach first-year writing. And as Emily Isaacs' *Writing at the U* documents, 86% of the programs in the institutions she surveyed are located in English departments (rather than independent writing programs), while 89% reported that tenure-line instructors teach first-year writing. In other words, such programs are very different from R1 and PhD granting institutions (the writing programs where most instructors

are trained to teach) where large proportions of first-year writing courses are taught by graduate students and contingent faculty, a WPA coordinates many elements of the program from curriculum to placement to assessment, and faculty have exclusive jurisdiction over what happens in a writing program.

Within this picture of higher education today, we want to share a few of the assumptions that we operate from in our work as two-year college writing teacher-scholar-activist-administrators.

Academic Hierarchies, Access and Privilege, and Social Justice

Three key and interrelated concepts inform our thinking, research, and writing: (1) academic hierarchies, (2) access and privilege, and (3) social justice. Our first and most basic assumption is that students receive benefits from going to college. According to the Pew Research Center, adults with college degrees earn more, have lower poverty rates, and are more likely to be homeowners. They are more likely to vote (Sondheimer and Green), to have higher levels of social trust, to volunteer, and to exercise regularly (Ma, Pender, and Welch). The foundation of our talk today is that first, students benefit from a college education in ways that influence their lives beyond the job market. Second, more students could and should have access to those benefits. Third, writing programs serve important functions in giving students access to the benefits that a college education offers, especially students whose experiences before college have not provided them with access to the resources available to more privileged students. Students who do not meet the admissions standards of selective universities often come to college with limited experience as academic readers and writers, and their overall success and pathways toward a degree are more closely linked to what happens in a writing program compared to some (but not all) students at more selective institutions. We want to describe some other assumptions that we see as potentially impeding the goal of providing access to the benefits of an equitable college education for all students.

Our second assumption is that hierarchies in higher education exist, are detrimental to the field, and impair our disciplinary work. As we discussed in our 2013 *College Composition and Communication* article, "Occupy Writing Studies," one of the major barriers to educational access, retention, and success for structurally disadvantaged students is the academic hierarchy system. Elaine Maimon has talked about this persuasively in her book *Leading Academic Change: Vision, Strategy, Transformation*, particularly looking at how harmful some of the embedded assumptions about higher education are such that they interfere with the ability of colleges and

universities to fulfill their stated mission. In an interview about her book, Maimon explains:

> Hierarchies are hard to break down because there's such a strong emotional quality to them. People really connect their identities to being at a university that is "prestigious," in part because it rejects large numbers of students. We have to turn that all around. . . . Right now, in the United States, we have a new majority. We have a large number of students who are not being well served and who have never been well served. And it's our challenge to make sure that they are. First-generation students, students of color, returning adults, and veterans.
>
> People ask us at Governors State, What's your biggest competitor for students? Is it this whole thing in Illinois about people going out of state? Well, our biggest competitor is not the University of Wisconsin, or Indiana University, or private universities, or community colleges. Our biggest competitor is nowhere. Thirty-four percent of the freshmen that we admitted for the last three years, fully qualified, went nowhere. That loss of human capital to this democracy is something that we should all be very concerned about. (Brown)

We summarize here some of the misconceptions that we see as troubling obstacles to the work that we do in the field of writing studies (as Maimon, Andrew Astin, and Leonard Cassuto also discuss in their work). These barriers include, in practice:

- the idea that the selectivity of an institution's admission process is a signal of quality—of students, instructors, the working conditions, the labor that takes place in that context, and the work produced there;
- the belief that positions that require less teaching are inherently better, more satisfying, or more valuable than those with more teaching;
- that graduate school prepares most students for the kind of work they will actually do in their careers; and
- that the terms "good student" or "smart student" mean something about a student's value or potential, when in actuality they reflect an individual's learning experiences, resources, and privilege prior to arriving at college.

Our third assumption is that privilege and access to higher education are connected. As a result of these first two assumptions, we see that one of the major challenges for the field of writing studies and writing program administration is to accurately acknowledge and respond to the changing

demographics of college students and college instructors. When we say *privilege* and *access*, we mean the pathways that will lead students to college, how they will get there, the potential barriers that might impede their progress toward a degree, and what makes it most likely that they will earn a credential.

As one brief example, consider the concept of the education desert, or what Ben Meyers explains in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* as "areas where it's difficult for placebound students to get to a college." A factor as simple as where students live can determine whether they receive a degree and the ease with which individuals with limited financial resources can attend college.

A May 2019 news story from *Inside Higher Ed,* "Race, Geography and Degree Attainment" illustrates the connected relationships between privilege and access (Fain):

- Almost 40% of Americans over the age of 25 have earned an associate, bachelor's or graduate degree.
- However, only 18% of adults from underrepresented racial minority groups hold a bachelor's degree in contrast to 35% of white adults.
- Only 8% of bachelor's degree holders live in rural areas (and attainment rate in those communities is lower than the national average, with 20% of residents holding a college degree compared with 34% in urban areas).
- Some urban areas with the highest degree attainment rates for white residents also have the largest gaps and racial inequities for adults from underrepresented groups. Some of the largest cities in the United States have significant educational gaps based on race: 56% in New York City, 47% in Denver, 44% in San Francisco, and 62% in Washington, DC.

Our final assumption is that social justice is central to the work of writing instruction and program administration. We know that writing programs have a very specific and significant function, one that is extremely high stakes for many students. At most institutions, first-year writing is a required gateway course or set of courses for a college degree. For first generation, lower income, and academically less prepared students, the pathway through developmental coursework and a writing program can mean the difference not just between earning credit or retaking a course but between staying in college or leaving higher education all together.

The Reshaping of Open-Access Writing Programs

Writing program work in the 21st century is fundamentally different from the work that many of us were trained to do. New technologies and continually expanding ways of communicating and accessing information have rapidly changed our students' experiences with literacy both inside and outside of school. Expectations for acquiring and using new literacies are part of what Daniel Keller calls "a culture of acceleration" in which "literacy is tied to educational, business, social, and technological contexts that value speed and increasingly enable and promote faster ways of reading and writing" (5). As a result, at the same time that students need to adapt to these new literacies, college students are also expected to enter and exit writing programs at a faster rate regardless of their prior experiences with writing, their preparation for college reading, and the life circumstances that shape their time as college students.

Pressure to speed up the rate at which students develop as college readers and writers is rapidly and unalterably changing writing program administration, instruction, and the experiences of student readers and writers at open-access institutions. Arguably no other group of faculty in higher education is currently micromanaged by individuals and groups outside of their discipline as much as those in two-year college writing and developmental English programs, which have increasingly been forced to give up authority over disciplinary work that should normally fall under their jurisdiction. Throughout the past decade, college completion and acceleration agendas have driven placement, curriculum, and instruction in writing programs at many (if not most) open-admissions institutions and at some less selective public universities. Some of these initiatives build on disciplinary scholarship and faculty-driven work—for example, the Accelerated Learning Program developed at the Community College of Baltimore County (Adams, et al.), which moves students from the highest level of developmental writing into credit-bearing coursework with a corequisite support course.

However, developmental education reform initiatives are increasingly imposed on writing programs through administrative and legislative mandates (Rutschow and Schneider; Whinnery and Pomeplia) in ways that are often disconnected from their disciplinary roots and that disproportionately affect institutions that serve low income, first-generation, returning adult, and underrepresented students. For example, in California, the most populous state in the country, state law AB 705 sets guidelines for placement procedures and requires community colleges to "maximize the probability that a student will enter and complete transfer-level coursework in English and math within a one year timeframe" (California Community

Colleges). Imposed mandates can stem from legitimate concerns about obstacles to student success, the inaccuracy of standardized test scores for placement, and increased time to degree completion. But they can also be an austerity measure that limits access to higher education for students who need support and time to develop as readers and writers before taking transfer-level writing coursework and transitioning to reading and writing in other disciplines.

As a profession, we need to develop a systematic, concerted effort to respond to forces external to our discipline that are fundamentally changing how reading and writing are taught at America's community colleges where more than one-third of college students enroll in any given year and where almost half of all undergraduates take at least some of their college coursework (Community College Research Center). Otherwise, we will continually scramble to respond to mandates that shape curriculum and instruction for the students who need quality postsecondary literacy instruction the most. We need advocacy, scholarship, and a shift in our own disciplinary thinking about who college students are and carefully collected evidence about what types of writing program structures and courses support literacy development for the diverse range of learners whose pathways through K–12 education and college are different from well-resourced residential students at selective universities. Unless we take action to respond to the forces that are reshaping our profession at open-access institutions, we will limit higher education to students who start college with the skills and cultural capital that we think that they should already possess before they arrive, increasingly restricting opportunities for students who benefit the most from time in a college writing program.

Developmental education reform initiatives (Hassel et al.; Schak et al.) provide a promising but complicated direction for writing program work that needs to more fully account for students who do not meet traditional definitions of college ready and are only admissible at open-access campuses. Rethinking how we place, teach, and support students in non-degree writing, reading, and English language learning programs is an essential endeavor that needs to draw more extensively from disciplinary knowledge, faculty expertise, and evidence rather than politically motivated decision making processes. Every writing program that offers non-credit-bearing writing and other forms of postsecondary literacy courses should actively assess the extent to which their basic skills programs create or reinforce educational hierarchies and systematically assess how they might change curriculum and instruction to reduce inequities and barriers to learning. Here are just a few examples:

- Reduce unnecessary layers of developmental coursework and determine how to create the fewest barriers possible for students' transitions to credit-bearing composition.
- Create placement mechanisms that reflect disciplinary knowledge to give individual students their best possible start to college.
- Replace standardized developmental education exit testing with an assessment of multiple pieces of student writing produced over time in a course.
- Design curriculum and instruction to engage students in meaningful reading and writing activities that support their literacy development and transitions to credit-bearing coursework.
- Assess whether placement and teaching practices create inequities for students of color and second language writers.

Writing programs also need the flexibility to create courses and academic learning support structures that effectively respond to the needs of local student populations rather than using curriculum and instruction developed for different students in a different teaching and learning context. For example, Giordano currently teaches at a large urban community college in Utah with a diverse global refugee population. Our small campus in Wisconsin enrolled students from small, underfunded rural high schools and Hmong students from urban schools with varying levels of experience with English, including many who could not read or write in their primary language. Giordano previously taught at an urban community college in the Northeast where most students were US-educated second language writers of color who came from a high school that the state government had taken over because of low performance. Each of these open-access teaching contexts requires a unique approach to curriculum and writing program development work that draws from the expertise of faculty who understand the diverse needs of their students.

Further, each of these institutions (and others with similar student populations) enrolls students who need time and intensive support from professionals who can help them develop proficiency in English and learn how to navigate the expectations of higher education. In contrast, some writing programs with developmental courses might be able to successfully accelerate all of their students to credit-bearing composition with or even without corequisite support based on their student populations or institutional missions (for example, a campus with an admissions process that requires students to demonstrate college readiness through high school performance or an applied technical college with an institutional mission that does not require students to take university transfer composition courses).

Developmental education reform is one of the most pressing social justice issues currently facing writing studies. At the national level, we haven't yet figured out how to achieve a balance between avoiding putting already marginalized and structurally disadvantaged students in non-degree courses that they don't need while also providing students who need support with equitable access to instruction and literacy experiences that will increase the likelihood that they can stay in college and attain a degree.

College access and privilege are deeply connected to the role of WPAs and writing studies faculty and their work in developing writing programs that support students' development as readers and writers, especially the extent to which members of our profession eliminate, push back against, ignore, or reinforce practices that create inequities for students and obstacles to degree attainment. However, the ability to engage in writing program change work and maintain authority over what happens in a program is a privilege that is increasingly taken away from faculty who work at open-admissions institutions. Such initiatives place an additional, often uncompensated workload on all faculty, but contingent faculty in particular can bear a disproportionate responsibility for implementing curricular changes at the classroom level.

Here are just four of many examples of educational reform initiatives that need to be faculty driven but that are often imposed on program administrators and instructors by legislation or higher education administration.

First, integrated reading and writing is a course structure and enrollment model that eliminates an extra non-degree class by combining reading and writing into a single course (Saxon et al.). This approach to structuring basic English skills curriculum reflects the statement from *NCTE Professional Knowledge for the Teaching of Writing* assertion that "Reading and writing are related" and a growing recognition that writing courses should more fully address the role of reading in postsecondary literacy development (Horning et al.; Sullivan et al.). Open-admissions writing programs need to account for the presence of less prepared readers at every level of a writing program. However, we are concerned about integrated reading and writing mandates imposed on instructors without training in reading, especially when combined with approaches to program development work and instruction that ignore scholarship on postsecondary reading and the teaching practices that support students' development as college readers (Flippo and Bean). When integrated reading and writing courses simply become reading-intensive writing courses without evidence-based reading instruction, students have limited or no opportunities for developing the skills and strategies required for reading in disciplines that require widely

varying reading tasks that are different from the work that they do in writing courses.

Second, guided pathways reform, which has been implemented at more than 250 community colleges (Jenkins et al., "Implementing Guided Pathways"; Jenkins et al., "What We Are Learning") is another example of how decisions about curriculum and course structures are increasingly imposed on two-year college faculty. The Community College Research Center's (CCRC) *Redesigning America's Community Colleges* (Bailey et al.) provides an alternative to the "cafeteria model" of curriculum, replacing diverse curricular array with more narrowly focused options that put students into early pathways toward a career. The guided pathways model addresses very real concerns about low degree attainment rates for community college students, and the CCRC recommendations draw from extensive research, including writing studies scholarship about placement, acceleration, and co-requisite support. However, guided pathways reform can turn into a mechanism for giving administrators control over curriculum and putting already disadvantaged students on tracks that eliminate educational options and provide them with less autonomy over their education in comparison to students at other types of institutions.

Third, placement reforms (Toth et al.; Klausman et al.; Hassel and Giordano) that work toward more equitable, evidence-based approaches to placing students into writing courses and assessing college readiness are a crucial component of writing program administration work not only for open-admissions institutions but also for every institution that bases students' starting point in a writing program entirely on standardized test scores. As we know, the use of standardized test scores is disconnected from students' actual experiences as writers (Klausman et al.) and disciplinary knowledge about writing assessment (NCTE and CWPA). But methods for placing students into writing courses often fall under the jurisdiction of administrative units outside of a writing program. Placement methods that are imposed on writing programs ignore the reality that effective placement happens only within the context of a program, the purpose of its courses in relation to an institution's mission and curriculum, and locally situated needs of student writers. Inequities in placement are likely to occur the further that processes for making decisions about placement are removed from the literacy experiences of students in writing courses, their prior learning, and a realistic understanding of the strengths and constraints in the support that a writing program can provide. However, as a profession, we also need to rethink our expectations about what it means to be ready for college writing and the extent to which our assumptions about the ideal college

writer create barriers and reinforce inequities for students on their pathways toward a college degree.

Finally, online learning is an important example of how social changes impact both postsecondary literacy and access to higher education. Two-year colleges serve the broadest range of students in any type of online program, including students who are inadmissible at other institutions and college seniors or even graduate students seeking to fulfill graduation requirements or prerequisites for professional school through courses with low tuition. Open-admissions online writing courses provide access to higher education for students who would otherwise be excluded from college, including place-bound students in rural communities, adults with full time jobs, learners with mental or physical health issues that prevent them from attending a physical campus, and students from underfunded campuses with limited curricular offerings. Faculty who express contempt for or dismiss online learning or do not believe that learning can take place anywhere but in a face-to-face classroom ignore the possibilities and opportunities that come from online education for students who have no other options for attaining a degree or who would experience significant delays in their time toward completing a degree without online coursework. Like the other examples of imposed mandates that we have discussed, control over curriculum and instruction for OWI courses at two-year colleges is sometimes taken away from faculty through administrative approaches to managing online education, ranging from required use of standardized courses to outsourcing courses commercially rather than developing them locally. As a profession, we need more scholarship on effective practices in online writing instruction in open-access contexts and for students who are less prepared for reading, writing, and using technology in a text-heavy but literacy-rich online learning environment.

Disciplinary Responsiveness, Knowledge, and Inclusion

Equally important for WPAs and faculty who work with the "new majority" of college students is not just the ability to respond to external mandates but also the ability to recognize when disciplinary developments do or do not take into account the needs of the complete range of college students. For example, transfer theory, writing about writing, and threshold concepts have become increasingly more important trends in our field, but all emerged from programs and scholarship at more selective institutions. Therefore, our discipline must ask questions about whether and how the knowledge derived from these models—and subsequent significant curricu-

lar reform that has emerged from them—suits students at two-year colleges and other open-access institutions.

Scholarship and curriculum development using the teaching for transfer model recently included participation from several two-year college teacher-scholars, and one of the first pieces that discusses teaching for transfer in two-year colleges appears in the September 2019 issue of *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* (Andrus, Mitchler, and Tinberg). However, somewhat limited attention to two-year college students and instructors has been paid to this model, to the development of writing about writing curricula, and the professional articulation of threshold concepts in the field, a concept that Jan Meyer and Ray Land have defined

> as akin to a portal, opening up a new and previously inaccessible way of thinking about something. It represents a transformed way of understanding, or interpreting, or viewing something without which the learner cannot progress. (1)

Recognizing what we previously noted, that students from a much wider range of social, economic, linguistic, racial, and age ranges make up student populations in writing programs, are we sure that our disciplinary knowledge is fully reflective of what a portal to writing studies looks like? Do we know how to adapt and assess the teaching for transfer model for students who start college in basic writing courses? What could we learn from two-year college instructors and students who use Wardle and Downs' writing about writing approach, increasingly influencing the teaching of postsecondary writing? Have we substantively considered whether teaching for transfer, writing about writing, and threshold concepts in writing studies themselves will be richer and more inclusive by accounting more fully for the new majority of college students?

Similar questions might emerge from looking at the current work on antiracist writing assessment practices, including the scholarship and theory of contract grading, and how this work can both effectively include and respond to the learning environments and students in two-year colleges and other open-access contexts. For example, does measuring labor and hours rather than using other evaluative approaches serve all students better, creating structured opportunities for them to take risks and be assessed on growth and process? Or does it place demands on students with extra-academic responsibilities and lives vulnerable to disruptions from family, work, and health issues that they cannot meet? Maybe it is both? We see value in making sure that our disciplinary efforts and published scholarship are inclusive before they become characterized as epistemological certainty within the discipline. We are interested in (and many in this room are prob-

ably also interested in) how we define the borders of our disciplinarity—the object we study. If it is writing, whose writing? Whose texts? In what contexts? And under what circumstances?

Questions for Consideration

What we hope to open up in this last part of our talk is a series of questions that link disciplinary scholarship, writing program development, and teacher training practices with the realities of new majority students, including the diverse literacy and learning needs of students both at open-access institutions and in all types of contexts for teaching college writing. We ask you to consider how your program work and teaching might support access to higher education through teacher-scholar-activism work, as Patrick Sullivan first introduced in 2015 ("The Two-Year College Teacher-Scholar-Activist") and which Darin Jensen has carried on in his blog of similar name. We also invite you to think about the strategies and practices we might use as a discipline to respond effectively to external legislative and Education Intelligence Complex (EIC) imperatives. Linda Adler-Kassner defines the EIC as a collection of NGOs (nongovernmental granting agencies), businesses, consulting firms, policy institutes, actions, and actors. The story it tells is

> called The Problem with American Education and How to Fix It. Elements of the story include what education is and isn't, what learning should and shouldn't be, and why. This story matters—for us writing professionals, for our students, and for what we are able to do with and around writing. ("2017 Chair's Address" 320–21)

We are interested in questions that help us connect the big picture with the local picture, the larger structures and values of our discipline with the specific choices made in programs and writing classrooms. As such, we pose a series of questions that we hope will invite conversation about the relationship between the larger work of the field and the locally situated work of individual writing programs and their instructors:

1. What assumptions do we make about academic literacies and what makes a "good" writer and a "bad" writer? What limitations do our assumptions about good writing and bad writing place on students' potential as writers?

2. What assumptions do we make about academic behaviors and what makes a "good" student or a "bad" student? To what extent do our assumptions about academic behaviors create inequi-

ties for students whose experiences and access to resources place constraints on their lives as students?

3. What assessment practices do we use in our programs and classrooms, and do they actually assess student learning, rhetorical growth, and proficiency? Are they fair? Are they just?

4. Do our policies and practices support and promote access, emphasize learning and growth, and invite all students to participate in college learning? Or do they reward behaviors and skills that students develop before they enter college?

5. Are we working on developing students' potential as readers and writers in our classrooms or are we rewarding the students who already meet our perceptions of what it means to be a "smart" student?

6. Are we using our perceptions about rigor as a substitute for careful reflection as instructors or intentionality in creating effective writing and learning environments for our students?

7. To what extent is our prevailing disciplinary knowledge inclusive—does it reflect, and/or adapt to, the range of college writing classrooms and spaces and students who are seeking a postsecondary credential?

8. Are we teaching our graduate students pedagogical adaptability—how to take what they learned and adapt it to new students, programs, institutions?

Last, we ask:

- What is our pathway forward as a discipline in advocating for public education for all students?
- How are we serving students whose only pathway is through an open-access institution, less selective regional comprehensive university, or online program?

These are the students who are already most harmed by austerity measures and imposed mandates. They are harmed when administrators impose models for curriculum and instruction that are disconnected from students' experiences as writers and systematically collected evidence that particular practices work within the local context of a writing program. They are harmed when instructors do not recognize, respond to, or design writing

courses that help them navigate their past or present academic and non-academic challenges. They are harmed when we create courses or program policies that become obstacles to degree attainment for reasons that are disconnected from skills, proficiency, and demonstrated learning. We think these questions can help us keep access and social justice at the forefront of our programs and of the discipline of writing studies.

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Advocacy, Independence, and the Painful Kairotic Moment for Rhetoric and Composition

Kimberly Gunter

This article traces contradictions in two streams of WPA scholarship: (1) hero narratives in which WPAs recount their advocacy for non-tenure-track (NTT) faculty and (2) calls for independence for rhetoric and composition. Ironically, both veins of scholarship ignore the shortage of composition faculty with the terminal degree, an absence that constrains disciplinarity. Grounding this discussion in my work as a WPA across universities, I argue that advocacy for NTT faculty must sit alongside the expectation that composition faculty participate in the discipline within which they work, a minimal requirement if meaningful independence is to be realized.

Fatigue triggers the southerner in me. "Oh, honey, I wish I could," I drawl, raising my hand shoulder-high, just as my aunties used to do, swaying in the pews during summer revivals. Turning down a colleague's invitation for apple picking, I groan, "I am *crawling* toward fall break." I don't add, "Have you people never seen a farm?!" The job has me exhausted *and* ornery these days.

WPA work, like housework, can feel seasonal. Observations and airing out the quilts in autumn, evaluations and cleaning curtains in spring, syllabi review and washing windows in August, scheduling classes and laundry, it sometimes seems, 24/7/365.

This latest round of scheduling, however, stings. Routine emails to the registrar about timecodes and familiar negotiation of faculty requests dissolve behind the foreground of this fact: Nearly 80% of the adjuncts whose spring 2019 classes I am assigning on this October day will not return to Fairfield University's core writing program in fall 2019. In four out of five cases, I scratch their names into my spreadsheet for the last time. Instead, February will find me weighing one against the other, struggling to identify the five or six from our current roster of 26 adjuncts to retain.

Programs are marked by seasons, too, kairotic periods that Michael Harker might characterize as "timing, appropriateness, and ethical underpinnings . . . at critical moments" (92). As a "new" WPA, hired to develop a new writing curriculum (one ultimately taught by a largely new faculty) located within an existing writing program, itself situated within an existing English department, all on an evolving campus with a changing core curriculum—yeah, kairos feels all too real and all too material these days.

The season in which I, Fairfield's core writing program, and our faculty find ourselves aligns with the greater kairotic moment of the discipline. Often the sole person responsible for manifesting rhetoric and composition on a campus, WPAs are particularly positioned to feel a contradiction within the current disciplinary zeitgeist. A tension abides, in the scholarship but equally in WPAs' lived experiences. First, WPAs frequently serve as advocates for contingent composition faculty, we subsequently articulating our heroic sagas within the scholarship. (This is not one of those tales.) Alternatively, we are frequently designated to make declarations of disciplinary independence, on our campuses and in academic monographs, declarations that result from and seek to further instantiate the discipline *as* discipline. Like the blues master Robert Johnson, we stand at what can be a kairotic crossroads of these two veins of scholarship and praxis.

In these reflections and in my daily work on campus, I sometimes feel that I am writing and working via Google Earth, now zooming in to describe local terrain, next shrinking back to read curves of horizons. Perhaps most grievously, herein, I speak of great bands of subjects as if they were singular—"the adjunct," "the WPA," "the discipline." I've resisted sprinkling quotation marks throughout, but concepts and populations deconstruct before me, and I realize I risk homogenizing that which is not. In the end, I describe my own midcareer move to a new institution and the competing allegiances that I feel within this new context. I attempt to illustrate how the storied advocacy for contingent faculty so common in WPA scholarship and likewise in my own administrative experience can sometimes counter the disciplinarity of rhetoric and composition on which calls for independence rely. Finally, I point to the resulting incongruity of WPA identities and call on the field to consider more fully independence's repercussions on staffing and WPA life.

* * *

Kim (texting): This is as close to "shop boss" as I ever wanna come. I just sent 11 e-mails to 11 internal candidates, telling them that none have been selected for first-round interviews for the full-time lines.

Tasha: Not even Caroline?[1]

Kim: I know, I know. I just feel sick.

Tasha: Oh hon.

Kim: I'd say I'm gutted, but given how _they_ are feeling, I can't very well think about how hard this is on _me_.

* * *

Like so many, Fairfield University is revising our core curriculum. Three core directors, four years of negotiation, and untold committees and compromises speak to the high stakes involved. Alongside typical concerns like budgetary allocations and redistribution of requirements, revision of our core is complicated by at least three contextual facts. First, Fairfield has transformed in the 40+ years since its core was last revised. No longer solely a liberal arts school, Fairfield, now a comprehensive university, houses nursing, business, and engineering colleges. Second, a Jesuit university, justice, discernment, and *eloquentia perfecta* ground the institution's values. Third, my hire as the director of core writing signals the campus's evolving recognition of rhetoric and composition.

The university confronts an undeniable kairotic moment, and no unit will feel the curricular transformation more than core writing. We will move from a dated approach to composition instruction (expository writing in the fall, writing about literature in the spring, and, with no writing instruction required thereafter, students presumably inoculated from genre missteps and comma splices in perpetuity). Now, students will complete a single course, Introduction to Rhetoric and Composition, followed by three writing across the curriculum (WAC) courses taught by faculty across core departments; alternatively, students may enroll in two WAC courses and one writing in the disciplines (WID) class within their major.

This curricular revision accompanies massive changes in staffing the new rhetoric and composition course. Our current staffing model relies on semester-by-semester contracts for adjunct faculty who teach over 80% of the sections in our two-course sequence. Strong faculty governance at Fairfield, however, ensured that a proposed budget was included in the proposal for revising the core. That budget stipulated the hiring of full-time core writing faculty. These non-tenure-track (NTT) assistant professors of the practice (POPs) will be contracted for three-year, renewable terms; will be eligible for promotion; and will teach a 3/3 load of the new course. Thus, when we adopted the core revision (a proposal that upper administration very much wanted to pass), we as a university faculty voted up a considerable increase in allocations for core writing.

The very faculty who have constituted core writing, however, face not just kairos but crisis: most of core writing's adjunct faculty face losing their jobs in our program. First, effective fall 2019, the number of core writing courses taught in the English department will be cut in half; thus, even if we were to receive no full-time lines, our staffing needs would be halved. Second, we will move to full-time POP lines. Consequently, our faculty

will decline from approximately 26 adjunct instructors who teach most of our roughly 106 sections per year to six full-time POP hires and perhaps five or six adjunct colleagues. Thus, most current core writing faculty face no longer teaching at our institution. This fact is not softened, however, by the chance to secure full-time work, for many current adjunct faculty are unlikely to be hired into those full-time lines.

Four factors coalesce to counteract some adjunct faculty's competitiveness for POP positions. First, perhaps partly because Fairfield so values its traditions of faculty governance and academic freedom, that a composition class should be (or even could be) part of a larger program with program-wide goals and outcomes is new for some and resisted by a few. Second, involvement in program life craters for many core writing faculty for understandable reasons. We live and work in the densely populated Northeast. Surrounded by colleges and universities, many faculty teach at multiple institutions (and need to, given the cost of living in the CT-NY-NJ tristate area). Pinpointing a time when most core writing faculty can meet for faculty meetings is impossible, and some dismiss any need to meet. While most are committed teachers who exchange instructional strategies and assignments, some have never had the opportunity nor encouragement to participate in the life of a single program. In some cases, lack of professional experience and resistance to programs transmogrifies into seeing program meetings and professional development as needless at best and averse for many. (We do pay for participation in professional development, but it is a nominal amount that hardly competes with teaching gigs at other institutions for increasing faculty bottom lines).

Third, none of our current adjunct faculty earned a terminal degree in composition and/or rhetoric, though many hold MFAs and a couple hold PhDs in literary studies. While many core writing faculty are talented, prolific creative writers, editors, and publishers and are deeply invested in student writers, some lack the recognition that creative writing, journalism, and rhetoric and composition—while informing one another in generative ways—also diverge. Put plainly, a few (though they make their living teaching it) do not appreciate that rhetoric and composition is an independent, scholarly discipline. Instead of co-creating a disciplinary community of practitioners, some eschew the discipline altogether. This lack of immersion in (or even familiarity with) the discipline may lead for some to what E. Shelley Reid calls "unconscious incompetence" (131).

Fourth, prior to my arrival, Fairfield stakeholders had not anticipated the personnel needed to support the cross-disciplinary WAC/WID initiative, an initiative housed within core writing. Faculty across campus express tentative excitement but also abiding anxiety about the teaching

of and responding to student writing. Within two months of arriving, I proposed that the university provide the new POP hires one course of reassigned time each semester to serve as WAC consultants. (The typical teaching load for Fairfield's NTTs is 4/4.) This course reassignment would allow us to fall within CCCC's *Principles for Post-Secondary Teaching of Writing* recommendation that "No English faculty . . . should teach more than 60 writing students a term," making these more equitable, more functional positions. In return, WAC consultants would provide one-on-one consultations, review syllabi, lead university-wide workshops, co-create disciplinary writing guides, and more. Particularly given core writing's unique position to bridge all colleges on campus via WID courses (the rest of the core is housed only within the College of Arts and Sciences), we sought to hire POPs with backgrounds in the rhetorics of health sciences, engineering, and business as well as global rhetorics and translingual writing, given our increasing number of international students. Couple the role of WAC consultants with the new rhetoric and composition course (a hybrid of WAC and Writing about Writing [WAW]), and many current adjunct faculty's competitiveness in national searches dwindles.

New to campus, I experience my own kairotic moment that centralizes my presence as an agentive actor. Any time a WPA joins a campus, kairos is heightened. We face skepticism from locals, and we ourselves become objects of observation and study, as we probably should. However, when hired to author a program and, at best, drastically cut the current faculty, "the ethical dimension of *kairos* that is often overlooked" (Harker 79) becomes all the starker.

* * *

> **Kim (emailing search committee members):** Colleagues . . . I have contacted all internal candidates and apprised them of the current status of their applications for this search, a painful task. . . . Bottom line, I just didn't want folks learning of our first round of interviews in a disrespectful way. Ugh. Brutal day.
>
> **Carol (a senior colleague):** Ugh. I am so sorry. . . . Is there anything I can do for you today? Biscuits? Pie? (You can see my mind goes straight to carbs . . .)

* * *

Donna Strickland asserts, "composition studies requires a dual schooling: an official schooling in composition pedagogy and rhetorical theories, and a usually unofficial schooling in the management of composition teachers and programs" (1). Strickland confesses, as a PhD student, she never imag-

ined being "interpellated into . . . the hierarchy of contingent teaching faculty and tenure-track administrators . . . endemic to writing programs" (1), yet every position she's held has included administrative duties. Exploring the discipline's "managerial imperative" (3), Strickland ultimately casts the managerial as energizing, innovative, and productive (119). On the way to that conclusion, though, Strickland reveals, if incidentally, a convention that runs throughout WPA scholarship and practice. She seeks to "examine the common place of marginalized but noble composition teaching" within its larger "economic enterprise" (7). That phrase, "marginalized but noble," startles, for it so succinctly summarizes not only "the common place" of composition classes on university campuses but a commonplace of the discipline. It condenses how WPA scholarship characterizes composition teachers, especially the instructors most often at the front of our classrooms, NTT and adjunct faculty.

As WPAs strategize in our offices and on listservs and as we theorize in the pages of journals, we often position ourselves on a hero's journey (albeit an often stymied one). Striving to enact Adler-Kassner's administrative philosophy of *tikkun olam*, or "repairing the world" (170), we confront and cajole, provoke and plead on the part of our marginalized, noble faculty. Alice Horning eloquently reflects this scholarship:

> In my ten years as a WPA, I was keenly aware every day of the exploitation of the forty or so part-timers in my program. I did what I could to improve their lives by trying to give them their preferred schedules and by lowering class size . . . to, in effect, reduce their workloads. I wrote about class size in a way meant to give other WPAs a resource to use in discussions with administrators. . . . So I have been raising my voice in support of contingent faculty for a while. . . . (73)

WPA scholarship often enacts an addictive symmetry: Marginalized but noble composition faculty are championed by a marginalized but noble WPA who is grounded in a marginalized but noble discipline.

Too often, we advocate at our own risk. Witness one paragraph cut from an earlier draft of this article:

> Having taken the baton of Adler-Kassner's "activist WPA," I perceived myself aligning with the blue-collar ranks of composition teachers. . . . Meeting with a former provost . . . who asked me cunningly, "What's it gonna take for us to make you happy, Kim?," I gleaned satisfaction in rejecting his dealmaking, leaning across a mahogany conference table, and replying, "It's gonna take what we've outlined: functional working conditions for our faculty." I had become a zealot for the cause. On days when voting rights were restored to NTT fac-

> ulty or when our program was awarded the CCCC Writing Program Certificate of Excellence, my smugness must have smelled. But it took a zealot, one armed with scholarly journals and budget mockups and bulleted proposals and, once, Nancy Sommers herself, to make gains for that program in that context at that time.

I wince at how I appear here, picturing myself astride Rocinante, *CCC* rolled up and brandished at oncoming windmills.

No doubt, my personal psychology led me to such struggles. The economy of the lowest earners producing the majority of a department's student credit hours taps a vein for me that traces back to my sharecropper great-grandfather and my mother setting collars in a Mid-South shirt factory. In Harker's terms (maybe in opposition to them?), in previous WPA positions, moving for full-time lines for adjunct faculty struck me as always kairotic—always timely, always appropriate, always ethical. Seventeen years later, "activist WPA" became part of my identity, at the heart of how I knew myself. More importantly, when my arguments succeeded, I saw lives change—adjuncts could quit side-hustles and get health insurance; students could find teachers in their offices and study within a program, one with far more consistency across sections.

* * *

> **One adjunct, upon hearing of Core Revision's adoption:** So we're screwed then.

* * *

Another seam of scholarship exists, though its assumptions are not frequently enough brought into dialectic with these WPA hero tales: calls for independent writing programs. Disciplinary declarations (successful ones, increasingly) of independence invoke their own commonplaces. Justin Everett and Cristina Hanganu-Bresch ably catalog this scholarship. They write that it is disciplinarity "articulated as power within the college structure" that inspires many programs to seek independent status (5). While foregrounding disciplinarity means for some that campus colleagues will "understand the disciplinary distinctiveness of Writing Studies from Literary Studies" (7), for others, recognition of composition's disciplinarity empowers the teaching of writing.

Metaphors for departmental splits and composition's independence abound, from Angela Crow and Peggy O'Neill's "divorce" (3) to Susan McLeod's "child now grown" (529) to Barry Maid's "emancipation" ("Creating Two" 130) to, ironically, Maid's "going home" ("More Than" 149). Composition's independence is sometimes dismissed as trendy, but appeals

for independence emerged concurrent to the contemporary discipline. Most famously, Maxine Hairston in 1985 painted for us the "Mandarin Wars" within English departments, positing, "Perhaps it's time that we repeated the exodus [of rhetoric], this time taking freshman English with us" (281). Even earlier, Janice Lauer in 1970 labeled composition's location within English a "ghetto": "Freshman English will never reach the status of a respectable intellectual discipline unless both its theorizers and practitioners break out of the ghetto" (396). In the scholarship of independence, then, we cast rhetoricians and compositionists and, specifically, WPAs who inhabit *de facto* leadership positions, less heroes crusading for downtrodden NTT faculty and more as revolutionaries, clutching the Good News that is rhetoric and composition *as discipline*.

This Good News of disciplinarity can wax romantic, whether due to a marketing mentality we may adopt in selling independence to university administrations or simply revolutionary zeal that recognizes opportunities that manifest when rhetoric and composition is unencumbered by others' agendas. It's useful to compare independence narratives to disciplinary histories. Strickland complains, for instance, "most histories of composition studies . . . more or less presume an audience of professionally secure teachers. With this emphasis . . . these histories have followed idealized trajectories" (5). For Strickland, these narratives' usefulness is undercut by recognizing that few of us direct idealized programs. I can't help but fear that some calls for independence may face the same criticism. Too often in listserv posts or conference papers lurks the assumption: if our programs were properly resourced and could crawl from beneath the thumb of literary studies (that is, if we but had support and a room of our own), we could readily succeed and could do so tomorrow.[2]

As Carrie S. Leverenz's work on the hiring of rhetoric and composition PhD's demonstrates, however, and as we like to remind graduate students, rhetoric and composition has not faced the hiring collapse that so many disciplines in English Studies have. With at least a 1:1 ratio of open, tenure-track positions to newly doctored candidates in a given year, Leverenz's work suggests a dearth of rhetoric and composition specialists. Rhetoric and composition PhD's are not only getting degrees; as Andrea Lunsford promised the *Chronicle of Higher Education* in 1998, "they're getting jobs" (Schneider A15).

Bring these three streams into confluence—our characterization of NTT faculty as marginalized but noble and WPAs as their champions; the insistence on the disciplinarity of and increasing calls for the independence of rhetoric and composition; and the robust "seller's market" for rhetoric

and composition PhD's—and we too often stop short of acknowledging, "Urbana, we have a problem"—a staffing problem.

* * *

> **Kim (describing to department colleagues the search for four core writing POPs):** Of the 95 applications received thus far, nearly 30% have a rhetoric and composition PhD in hand or are ABD. None of these applicants with the degree in discipline are among current core writing faculty.

* * *

Bruce Horner edges toward this possible contradiction between advocacy and independence. Horner observes that the authors of CWPA's statement on *Evaluating the Intellectual Work of Writing Administration*

> argue that the success of staff development depends primarily on "the degree to which those being administered value and respect the writing administrator," which they take to result from the ability of the WPA to "incorporate current research and theory into . . . training". . . . (168)

Horner, skeptical, replies:

> But there is no reason to believe that staff value and respect . . . the WPA's knowledge. . . . Typically, staff members are not in a position to recognize, let alone evaluate, the WPA's command of this knowledge. . . . What they might recognize as "new research and theory" may well be anything but. (169)

Horner asserts that many instructors are simply not steeped enough in the discipline to surmise accurately its best practices.

To his point, of the 26 faculty teaching in Fairfield's composition program this semester (spring 2018), one holds a terminal degree in the discipline: me. In the previous program that I directed for nine years, though enrollment is far greater, the number of terminal degrees is lower. Not a single instructor with the PhD in rhetoric and composition is teaching General Education composition (though two are ABD). The *National Census of Writing* mirrors these numbers and underscores the contradiction too often left unaddressed in calls for independence. In 2011–12 (the most recent data), in just over 80% of reporting writing programs, no tenure-track writing faculty taught first-year composition; in 85% of reporting programs, no full-time, NTT faculty taught FYC either (Gladstein and Fralix). In the very sites which have resulted from rhetoric and composition's disciplinarity, we have "outsourced" its teaching to the least compensated, least secure

faculty positions. Moreover, given the dearth of and competitive market for rhetoric and composition PhDs, in many of these same programs we will also find the least prepared teachers. When filtering census data by the Catholic Consortium of Colleges and Universities, the numbers are even worse: 90% report no tenure-track writing faculty teach FYC, and 100% report no full-time NTT writing faculty teaching FYC. With so few teachers holding a terminal degree, we should not be surprised that, unlike the great majority of introductory courses on campus, first-year composition in many instances retains skills-based, remediation approaches and often little resembles the discipline discussed at conferences and in the pages of journals like this one.

Horner notes that some FYC faculty may not merely be unfamiliar with the discipline but may resist it: "as typically overworked staff, they may have a vested interest in rejecting a WPA's attempts to introduce programmatic changes informed by . . . research and theory when it means significant disruptions to their practices . . . " (169). Horner hints at a sort of sly resistance, a calculating rejection of professional development because of the (too frequently unrewarded) labor that results from embracing it, underscoring Harker's conviction that teachers may refuse to "revisit their own approaches to writing" (Harker 89).

In examining instructors' resistance, it is useful to consider underlife. In his analysis of Braddock Award–winning essays, Harker turns to Robert Brooke's "Underlife and Writing Instruction," pondering whether underlife violates kairos. Brooke relies on Erving Goffman's definition of underlife as "activities people develop to distance themselves from the surrounding institution. . . . Underlife allows individuals to take stances toward the roles they are expected to play, and to show others the stances they take" (Brooke 144). Brooke observed composition students attempting to "'[get] by' in the classroom without losing themselves in its expectations" (147). Harker speculates that some might reasonably assess student writers' underlife activities as disrupting kairos: They "'go against the grain' of the classroom. They interrupt and often draw attention away from the instructor or task at hand" (86).

As Fairfield's new WPA, I glimpsed underlife immediately. Asked to describe the new writing program at an August retreat, I had arrived on campus less than two weeks earlier. Thus, in depicting the burgeoning program, I largely relied on documents that predated my arrival (e.g., the core revision proposal that characterized the suggested WAC program and CWPA Consultant-Evaluators' site report from the previous year). When asked to describe a WAC assignment (I offered a project that asks students to complete primary research on the rhetoric of a community they wish to

join), one colleague snapped, "We already do that." She continuing, I intuited that she challenged not so much me personally but the new curriculum (including the notion that a WAC/WAW course was substantively different than the doomed Expository Writing/Writing about Literature sequence) and the general brouhaha over it.

Harker switchbacks, though, arguing to envisage underlife as only resistant to kairos is shortsighted: "to completely ignore or harshly reprimand a student who challenges the temporal and spatial boundaries of a classroom through some form of *unkairotic underlife* behavior is . . . to ignore a pedagogical opportunity and to disrupt the generative and constructive potential of that moment" (86). Harker echoes Brooke's conclusion:

> to really learn to write means becoming a certain kind of person, a person who accepts, explores, and uses her differences from assigned roles to produce new knowledge, new action, and new roles. . . . underlife shows us this process. . . . It suggests we think carefully about the identities we have, the identities we model, and the identities we ask students to take on, for . . . building identity is the business we are in. (152)

What to make, then, of underlife not from students but teachers? What is the "constructive potential" (152) in some faculty's resistance to the discipline within which they teach? What are the identities that WPAs model, and what identities do we ask composition faculty to adopt?

* * *

> **Kim (via Messenger, describing a meeting with a dean at a previous institution):** So she's kvetching about students' poor writing, extrapolating composition faculty's poor teaching, and calling me out, and I say, "Well, we're in a remote location. If you want me to hire more skilled faculty, I need full-time lines to conduct national searches; I can't just call Manpower Temp. Agency and have them send over Rhet./Comp. PhD's." And she says, "You think it's hard to find a writing teacher! Try and find a chemist!"
>
> **Tasha (long suffering):** Help-rejecting complainer, that's what she is.

* * *

I have written my own hero tales, my advocacy always prioritizing full-time lines. My slog as WPA has included promoting multi-year contracts, pushing for sound office spaces (hell, any office spaces), requesting keys to the copy room (!), and standing in a computer boneyard trying to splice

together functioning machines for adjunct faculty. Inevitably, though, I have led programs that relied on too many adjuncts, and full-time lines always persisted as my most constant goal. Regardless of how talented many were, reliance on adjuncts was egregious for lots of reasons. Low course caps matter little if faculty teach eight classes across three institutions, and professional development falters if only 20% of faculty attend workshops. Full-time lines, then, seemed to supersede everything.

At Fairfield, though, I am cast less as ally and more as adversary by current NTT faculty, and I'm peeved with myself for struggling with that reality. After all, Nedra Reynolds reminds us, ethos includes "the individual agent as well as the location . . . from which that person speaks" (326). Loading that 26-foot U-Haul, I thought I had accounted for location. Moving from a public, southern, isolated campus of nearly 18,000 to a private, northeastern, Jesuit campus only an hour north of New York City, the radio transitioned from bluegrass to jazz on the ride up I-95, but there are nuances of context we can't learn from university fact books or the FM dial.

So I return to Brooke, "think carefully about the identities we have, the identities we model, and the identities we ask [others] to take on" (153), and acknowledge, if we apply his admonition only to our teaching, we risk hypocrisy and paternalism as administrators. How do I hold myself accountable to Brooke's warning? Said more frankly, I realize the zealot that reasoned and ranted for full-time positions for previous programs' adjuncts would find me in this new context unrecognizable. How can the WPA who carried stacks of adjunct faculty's student evaluations to cocktail hours where I thought I might bump into the dean now support national searches prioritizing disciplinary PhDs, a degree I know that most local adjuncts will not have?

As flaccid as it sounds, I turn to distinctions in contexts, first, local ones.

The most obvious difference is resources. By fall 2019, Fairfield's core writing program will be taught almost entirely by full-time rhetoric and composition faculty, all of whom will have reassigned time for additional disciplinary roles on campus (i.e., WAC consultant or assistant director positions). (We have filled four lines for 2018–19 and will fill another two for 2019–20.) Thus, that most intractable battle has been won. I have spent so much of my professional life pushing for what is already ensured here due to the foresight of our cross-disciplinary faculty and the ethic of the administration. With writing designated one of three core "signature elements" and full-time lines ensured, my baseline as administrator has shifted.[3] Moreover, with a 3/3 teaching load, renewable contracts, promotable lines, and a competitive salary, these POPs are good positions.

As influential as resources is institutional respect for rhetoric and composition. Upper administrators are educated about the discipline. The vision of what core writing could be was shaped in no small measure by CWPA Consultant-Evaluators. That the institution valued the discipline enough to invite this team speaks volumes. CWPA reviewers cautioned that the new composition course shouldn't emerge a mishmash of our current Expository Writing and Writing about Literature courses, but the institution should seize this intellectual moment and craft a purposefully designed course. I quoted that line to our provost; she responded, "If those reviewers had said nothing else, that review would have been worth the money." Imagine my surprise. (On a previous campus, one administrator rebuffed my request for a CWPA review, concluding, "They're rhet./comp. people. Of course they'll agree with you.") Fairfield is not Camelot, and there are challenges everywhere, but I'm grateful that this was not my first position. I have the good sense to know how fortunate I am to be here.

There's also this: At both Fairfield and my previous institution, many adjunct faculty graduated from programs housed in local English departments. At my previous university, that meant that many NTTs had completed a Composition Theory, Practice, and Pedagogy seminar and three one-hour mentoring courses (Teaching in the Writing Center, Teaching Expository Writing, and Teaching Writing Across the Curriculum). Many students also chose to earn a rhetoric and composition graduate certificate which required additional coursework (options included Teaching Basic Writing, WPA Scholarship, Digital Rhetorics, etc.) and either a capstone or a thesis. Many spent two or three years post-MA teaching in the composition program, traveling to conferences, and preparing doctoral applications. (Those MA graduates have earned rhetoric and composition PhD's from University of Louisville, Iowa State University, Washington State University, Miami University and are now studying at Florida State University, Syracuse University, and Michigan State University.) Though that program's resources were thinner, those adjunct faculty were extraordinarily well versed in the discipline. At Fairfield, however, many adjunct faculty hold MFAs, many earning this degree from our own stellar program and others like it that do not require rhetoric and composition coursework. Thus, though these faculty hold a terminal degree in creative writing, many are far less familiar with rhetoric and composition.

Finally, here, as WPA, I prioritize terminal degrees in rhetoric and composition in order to give this new signature element of Fairfield's core its best chance for success or even survival. Chris Thaiss and Tara Porter demonstrate that it's easier for WAC programs to fail than to succeed: "well over half of the 418 programs identified in . . . 1987 . . . no longer exist or have

been 'restarted' in the years since" (458). Part of what makes our POP positions good ones, for both the hires and the institution (i.e., the reassigned time to work as WAC consultants), is what demands deep knowledge of the contemporary discipline. Hiring POPs with expertise in the rhetoric of the sciences, medicine, or engineering (for that matter, in digital design, ePortfolios, response to student writing, translingual approaches to writing, etc.) enables WAC consultants most effectively to assist cross-disciplinary faculty in reimagining writing in their courses. POPs can then rely on these interactions as a kind of laboratory for their own scholarship. This dynamic demands contemporary expertise that the typical MFA or MA candidate is simply unlikely to hold.

Local contexts crouch within a disciplinary milieu that reiterates rhetoric and composition's disciplinarity and its (often modest) best practices for the teaching of composition. The Two-Year College English Association (TYCA) describes exemplary FYC teaching as incorporating "the application of the best available theoretical approaches." The CCCC *Statement on Preparing Teachers of College Writing* stipulates that a requirement for the hiring of writing faculty is their completion of "graduate coursework . . . [in] composition theory, research, and pedagogy . . . and rhetorical theory and research." CCCC's *Principles for the Postsecondary Teaching of Writing* argues that institutions safeguard "sound writing instruction" by "ensuring that instructors have background in and experience with theories of writing," emphasizing instructors' "attendance at local, regional, or national Composition and Rhetoric conferences." Reading each new volume of *CCC* hardly guarantees effective teaching. (Oh, but if it did.) But being a passionate writer or student advocate is not enough either, and while earning the PhD in the field may not guarantee effective teaching, the terminal degree and scholarly participation in the discipline does at least promise the likelihood that FYC students will be introduced to the contemporary discipline of composition-rhetoric.

Another truth: One person does not make a writing program. As a WPA, I can parade across campus like *The Music Man*'s Harold Hill, thrusting aloft a copy of the CWPA *Goals and Outcomes Statement* to the tune of "Seventy-Six Trombones," but what every WPA needs—more importantly, what every campus needs—is a community of rhetoric and composition specialists who can co-create with varied stakeholders a culture of writing in which students can thrive as composers. Returning to the above, CCCC recommends graduate students participate in program assessment and train to work in writing centers (*Preparing Teachers*); TYCA stipulates instructors "build deep theoretical and practical knowledge of . . . areas, such as curriculum design, writing theory, multi-modal composing, . . . writing across/

in the disciplines, . . . program assessment." No one disputes that vibrant writing programs should provide opportunities for this sort of professional development locally, and faculty without the terminal degree can and do build this expertise. But not everywhere. This deep professionalization is rarer than not, not least because of the scarcity of material resources to support contingent faculty in this work.

Here's the harder thing: WPAs are often the first to grapple with potential contradictions between advocacy and independence. I am not suggesting we set the two ever in opposition, but we must acknowledge the dialectic, one that is complex and frequently problematic. Advocating for sustainable working conditions for all composition faculty must stand alongside the expectation that composition faculty understand and participate in the current discipline within which they work. This, in fact, may be the minimal expectation if individual programs and the discipline are to flourish and earn the respect that enables arguments for independence in the first place.

Laura Micciche writes eloquently of "disappointment as a central affective component of the job" (435). Arguing that disappointment "characterizes English studies generally and composition studies—particularly writing program administration (WPA)—specifically" (432), Micciche attributes our malaise to everything from fleeting job opportunities to the unceasing need to argue for WPA work as intellectual labor. I bring into conversation with Micciche two additional discursive facts. First, Judith Butler reassures, the historicity of discourse that hails any one of us into being "exceeds in all directions the history of the speaking subject" (28). I, then, as WPA, enter a discipline, a position, and an identity the lore of which precedes even as it constructs me, sometimes as a disappointed advocate of marginal but noble faculty. Second, rhetoric and composition is generous. Perhaps we have even prided ourselves on a disciplinary culture of pleasantness and concession. This affective norm of (disappointed) compromise is partly pragmatic. The discipline is perceived as new (though we might argue that scads of the humanities derive from it), and we nowhere near approach having enough rhetoric and composition specialists to staff our classes. Both have always meant mentoring (prodding?) others onward in their understanding of our work. Additionally, central to our study remains the development of writers, a project that (perhaps sometimes too simplistically) assumes academic and social mobility as goals. In 2019, then, we all enter rowdy parlor conversations in full swing, both globally and locally, disciplinarily and subjectively.

Maybe it's my sense of disciplinary "niceness" that leads me to contort myself here. Or maybe it's my need to feel continuity across contexts in

my own identity as advocate. Maybe both, and more, collude to demand and dissuade me from candor—from arguing that kairos here and now at Fairfield was ignited not only by local champions of writing but by the long trudge of the discipline itself; from affirming baldly that, when we at the local level (all of us, all too rarely) can, we must step into the circle of respect that we have argued at the national level the discipline deserves; from asserting that disciplinary citizenship which the terminal degree signals matters, yes, "even" in first-year classrooms; from saying that sometimes kairos demands that we prize the discipline over disappointed poets and Victorianists.

* * *

> I cock an eyebrow and turn my laptop to Ross. "I wonder if this is for me?" After a stinging department meeting during which I explained the search committee's process, my Spidey sense intuits rumors crackling across Fairfield County.
>
> Ross reads the Facebook exchange between two adjunct faculty. One has posted a meme that soothes, "No one is judging you, sweetie. That's your conscience talking." Another responded, "Oh wow, I never thought of that."
>
> Ross feigns dismay. "Lucille maintaining deniability even as she is passive-aggressive on social media? Can't be."

* * *

To Harker's definition of kairos, "timing, appropriateness, and ethical underpinnings present at critical moments" (92), I add prologue and epilogue. In my amended definition, kairos is a process, personal and public, inflected locally and nationally, of "timing, appropriateness, and ethical underpinnings present at critical [discursive] moments." And it damn sure ain't bounded by consensus, and it can hurt like hell.

Strickland urges us to see class, labor, and management not as fixed but as processes:

> If we understand that a person acting in a managerial role is not by definition a member of an exploiting class—although that person may by default be contributing to an exploitative class process—then it becomes possible to see writing programs as sites of class struggle, as sites focused on transforming the extent, type, and conditions of exploitations in particular settings. (15)

These processes unfold "through a network of affiliate actions" (15). Taken collectively, Strickland declares that these processes create an inherently

managerial discipline, but she reframes this characterization with the managerial finally serving as "an imperative energizing the field," producing "professional organizations . . . innovative scholarship . . . new ways of practicing teaching, writing, and, yes, administration" (119).

I gather two messages. First, Strickland's work points me toward a Hegelian dialectic of the day-to-day, grinding compromise of WPA life. Tapping my Doc Martens (no longer made solely in the UK) and scanning email on my iPhone (with its 175 pounds of carbon waste) as I stew in my inefficient 2003 Honda idling in traffic, I am indicted. Just as I am when I request piecework contracts for part-time faculty and hedge, invoking the "strength of the applicant pool," when one of those adjuncts asks me about his chances for a full-time position. No hero's tale, I don't come off looking real good on days like this one.

Conversely, Butler recounts the discursive position of us all. She reflects,

> the vulnerability to being named constitutes a constant condition of the speaking subject. And what if one were to compile all the names that one has ever been called? Would they not present a quandary for identity? Would some of them cancel the effect of others? (30)

Maybe, but perhaps only if we insist on identity as persistent. If, though, we acknowledge labor and management and WPA—all identity, really—as process and if we acknowledge that the process of kairos invokes given identities at given moments, we may encounter representations of ourselves that are shockingly disorienting (no rarity of modern life, I know).

Upon arrival at Fairfield, I became the "new WPA," a moniker that can bristle when bringing years of administrative experience. When I am tempted to suggest colleagues relocate those quotation marks to read "'new' WPA," however, I pause, reminding myself that I may never again have as much influence on this campus as I do in my first year. Particularly with the sacrifice of tenure to join this faculty, I feel the probationary-ness, the liminality of my current position, and I feel watched. But being watched also means being seen, and any time any one of us enters a new campus as WPA, the moment is kairotic, for us and for the institution. Here, I am starting again, beginning anew. With this positionality comes great insecurity but great possibility, too.

Intervening in the class processes fashioned in composition programs demands the seizing of (as possible, the sparking of) kairos at the local level. It means arguing for creating full-time lines. Period. It means being innovative in our design of positions so that various stakeholders realize how they benefit from creating just working conditions for writing faculty.

We create kairos as a discipline, too, though. Strickland's managerial imperative that led us to create conferences, journals, doctoral programs,

undergraduate majors, pedagogical best practices—all coalesce into greater respect for the discipline *as* discipline, making what was before kairotic now seem banal.

If local programs are to take advantage of these cultural shifts in ways that the movement for independence of rhetoric and composition demands, moments manifest when we must value disciplinary knowledge more than hero tales or compromise. Said another way, as the discipline succeeds, ironically, WPA may become an even less comfortable identity to inhabit. Nonetheless, we as WPAs, in campus quads and in scholarly journals, must contend more frankly with this dialectic, one that all too frequently falls first on us.

Notes

1. Pseudonyms are assigned to colleagues and friends throughout.

2. And I know very well this characterization may be true at some institutions, as I have discussed previously (Rhoades, Gunter, and Carroll).

3. Social justice and interdisciplinarity are the others.

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Responding to Bullying in the WPA Workplace

Cristyn L. Elder and Bethany Davila

This article reports on findings from interviews with WPAs and other stakeholders on their experiences with bullying in the WPA workplace. We argue that, although workplace bullying is a pressing problem in our field, it has been largely unaddressed in WPA scholarship and resources. As such, the main aims of this article are to serve as a call to action for our field and colleagues and to facilitate a necessary shift in culture through specific recommended actions. The article contains four narrative case studies that demonstrate the characteristics of bullying and the toll bullying takes on a writing program and the people within it. In response to these case studies, we offer five recommendations for agentive responses to workplace bullying.

In the edited collection *Defining, Locating, and Addressing Bullying in the WPA Workplace* (Elder and Davila), we argue that workplace bullying is a pressing problem in rhetoric and composition—one that has been, for the most part, unaddressed in our field's scholarship and resources. The collection's chapter authors draw on personal experiences to locate bullying across institution types and writing program spaces and to theorize and define bullying. Collectively, the chapters describe bullying that ranges from institutional racism, microaggressions, mobbing, "academic systemic incivility" (Griswold), and emotional abuse. These persistent, negative, and demeaning behaviors (including verbal abuse, rumors, and excessive criticism) fall within commonly agreed-upon definitions of workplace bullying (Fox and Cowan 124; Keashly and Neuman 49; Salin 1215; Vega and Comer 101). Bullying differs from disagreements or rudeness in that the behaviors represent a pattern, typically span a period of time (a common time frame referenced in the scholarship is three to six months), and can negatively impact a target's work performance and physical and mental health (Vega and Comer 106; Fox and Cowan 116). Additionally, according to Vega and Comer, workplace bullying "can create an environment of psychological threat" (101).

The first chapter of *Defining, Locating, and Addressing Bullying in the WPA Workplace* reports on the results of our national survey of stakeholders in the WPA workplace. Through the results of the survey, we learned that bullying in our field can span from exclusion and isolation to intimidation and threats. The behaviors are directed at WPAs by administrators, other faculty, and even students. Sometimes the WPA is the bully themselves (Davila and Elder 21–28). Moreover, approximately 85% of the 124 survey respondents indicated they had experienced bullying in the WPA workplace (Davila and Elder 21).[1] This high incidence, coupled with our field's silence on the issue, presents a problem that we argue our field can no longer ignore.

Themes that pervade our research on workplace bullying have been discussed recently in threads on the WPA-L but in terms of sexual harassment rather than bullying (see, for example, "Rubrics to Assess Writing Assignments," which originated on October 21, 2018). These themes include the almost audible frustration with the silence from those in positions of power to address the issue and the complicity of those who should be allies. As many respondents on the WPA-L are at a loss with how to respond to sexual harassment or assault—and that's if they've even noticed the problem—the same goes with workplace bullying, some patterns of which are described below. However, while the discussion on the listserv has brought much-needed attention to the issue of sexual harassment in our field and writing programs, the issue of bullying remains largely ignored or unaddressed. Although we do not equate bullying with sexual harassment (the latter has legal ramifications while the former, thus far, does not), we do believe that both are toxic parts of our field's culture and both require direct action.

This article extends the national survey findings referenced above with an analysis of qualitative data from interviews we conducted with WPAs and other stakeholders on their experiences with bullying in the WPA workplace. Additionally, we offer five recommendations for agentive responses as a result of these findings. Through this research, we aim to counter the avoidance that appears in each of our interviews under various guises: people (colleagues, mentors, administrators) offer advice in the face of bullying, telling targets to "keep their heads down" (i.e., become invisible), not to "poke the bear" (i.e., don't attract bullying or bring it upon themselves), or even to put on their "big girl pants" (i.e., grow accustomed to and accept the bullying). Targets are told to limit their interactions with their bullies, which often means they take a leave of absence, step down from an administrative position, take a position outside of their department, or find another job. All of these strategies, ultimately, are forms of avoidance. Of course, in some instances, these strategies are the only form

of agency a target has or, for various reasons, are the best approach for targets to take. Nonetheless, in the interviews we report on here and in the existing scholarship, we can see that avoidance does not solve the problem. Unaddressed bullying allows for additional bullying and can normalize the destructive behaviors as part of the culture (McDaniel, Ngala, and Leonard; Salin). Additionally, since bullying, like sexual harassment, is a pattern of behavior, avoidance may help one target deal with the bullying but does not stop the behavior itself. Instead, bullies move on to other targets—an unfortunate reality that is consistent across our interviews.

Our main aim in this article is to call our field and colleagues to action, to argue that inaction—especially among bystanders and allies with the ability to do something—is unethical, and to facilitate a necessary shift in culture through specific recommended actions. Below we provide four case studies that demonstrate characteristics of bullying and the toll bullying takes on a writing program and the people within it. In response to these case studies, we offer specific suggestions and recommendations for action one may take when witnessing or experiencing these kinds of bullying.

Methods

In this IRB-approved study (UNM protocol #866852-2), we interviewed twenty-two participants, including WPAs and other stakeholders in the WPA workplace, who had volunteered as a part of our national online survey on bullying in the WPA workplace. Of the twenty-two participants, 77% identified as female, 18% as male, and 5% as transgender. The participants were between the ages of 30 and 69; they were assistant professors (18%), associate professors (36%), full professors (18%), lecturers (14%), non-tenure-track administrators (5%), or they held positions that spanned these categories (9%). They worked at liberal arts colleges (36%), research institutions (50%), community colleges (5%), or institutions not represented by the categories we offered in the pre-interview survey (9%). The vast majority of our participants (95%) identified as white, and one participant (5%) identified as Mexican American. These demographics, which include different ages, multiple institutional types, varying faculty and administrative positions, and (though to a lesser extent) different races and genders, reveal the pervasiveness of bullying.

We began the interviews by asking participants to describe their experiences with bullying in the WPA workplace and followed up with clarifying questions as necessary. We also asked participants to confirm our understandings regarding their perceived agency in the situation and asked them,

with the benefit of hindsight, what they thought could have been done to improve the situation.

As co-principal investigators of this study, we performed the first nine interviews together to get a sense of the kinds of clarifying questions we wanted to ask and to ensure our protocol was specific enough that we could conduct interviews individually. We then split the remaining interviews between the two of us. We recorded the interviews with participants' approval and kept careful written notes for each one.

Because we analyzed our survey data in advance of analyzing the interviews (see Davila and Elder for a description of this analysis), we had a sense of the patterns in behaviors of bullying as they relate to the NAQ-R (Negative Acts Questionnaire-Revised), a survey instrument designed to catalogue behaviors of bullying in workplaces (Einarsena, Hoelb, and Notelaersa; see the appendix for the slightly adapted list of NAQ-R behaviors as they were included in our survey[2]). For example, we knew that over half of our survey respondents

> indicated they frequently or occasionally experienced . . . bullying in one or more of the following ways: being ignored or excluded (67%), someone withholding information which affects your performance (59%), having your opinions ignored (59%), spreading of gossip and rumors about you (52%). (21)

Moreover, we knew that in the WPA workplace, some of these behaviors were directed at the writing program, not just the person (e.g., the category "spreading of gossip and rumors about you" often included "gossip and rumors related to a writing program") (Davila and Elder 24). Through our analysis, we wanted to know more about individuals' experiences with bullying, including what kinds of situations seem to give rise to bullying, how people respond to bullying, what the effects of bullying are, who the bullies are, if there are patterns in terms of contextual factors and bullying, and how we can advise our field to respond to bullying in the WPA workplace. As such, we first analyzed the interviews according to these questions.

In what follows, we offer four case studies coupled with five recommended responses for our field. The case studies each focus on different characteristics of bullying, including bullying by those who have long been known to be problematic but whose negative behaviors have never been adequately addressed within a department and institution, bullying by the chair of the department, bullying from those within our field, and bullying that extends beyond one individual and includes groups of people who bully other groups of people categorized by discipline, department, or program—a phenomenon that we describe as program mobbing and discuss

in more detail in case #3 in this article. However, experiences with bullying rarely fall into tidy categories. As such, individual interviews (represented here by their interview numbers) might be used as evidence for multiple characteristics of bullying. Nonetheless, we've used the four cases described below to highlight the different patterns of bullying that emerged in our interviews and to identify possible responses to these behaviors.

In order to protect our participants' identities, we chose not to rely heavily on extended quotations. Instead, for these case studies, we drew from multiple, related interviews to write the narratives of different experiences with bullying. The intermixing of details in the case studies allows us to include specific details and representative examples while still protecting interviewees from identification and retaliation.[3] Moreover, because these case studies are organized around consistent patterns that emerged in the individual interviews as well as across interviews, we believe they allow us to effectively counter concerns about evaluating truth or representing the "other side of the story." While some readers might be tempted to wonder whether a respondent misinterpreted or misrepresented a situation or whether there could be a justification for the behavior described in the cases, we argue that because these patterns are reported across interviews, claims of bullying are validated.

Finally, it is important to note that no aspects of these accounts have been fictionalized. Rather, individual experiences have been aggregated, including our own experiences with bullying at our institution. Each narrative includes some context surrounding the bullying, the characteristics and effects of the behaviors, and the target's and institution's response (or lack thereof) to the bullying.

Case #1: When "Toxic" Behaviors Go Unchecked

"That's just the way she is." "Try to keep your head down." "Avoid her." This was the advice Maria received when she first started asking around about a fellow faculty member's unprofessional behavior.[4] Somehow her colleague Stephanie was allowed to scream at people in meetings and in hallways, slam doors, and pound on desks, all without repercussion. Perhaps worse than these public displays of aggression and intimidation were her more manipulative behaviors: the gossip that aimed to turn colleagues against someone, the formal and informal false charges made about people's credentials and professional backgrounds, and the pattern of unethical treatment of graduate students such as insisting a student lie in an IRB application (which the student ultimately refused to do), telling grad students to avoid one of their peers because he had a dangerous (unsubstantiated)

mental illness, and repeatedly backing out of writing recommendation letters for graduate students at the last minute. Despite widespread knowledge of these patterns of behavior, the department never confronted Stephanie.

Maria later learned that in addition to the yelling and undermining, Stephanie also regularly threatened to file suit against the department, the institution, and even specific colleagues, claiming in an ironic reversal that she was the target of bullying and deserved legal recourse. In fact, Stephanie did end up filing institutional complaints against Maria. Even though there was plenty of evidence of Stephanie's pattern of bullying behaviors and no objective evidence to substantiate her own claims of being bullied, no one wanted to risk the time and money of a lawsuit, so her unsupported claims protected her and forced Maria to prove Stephanie's charges were untrue; even more troubling, administrators refused to take action against the real bullying that was happening. What the department and institution seemed to have lost sight of was the enormous cost of the unchecked bullying. Stephanie lowered morale, undermined the WPA, and continually put graduate students in a horrible position of having to decide whether to report her and risk retaliation or to just try to pick up the pieces after she would turn against them midstream. Likewise, by not addressing the behaviors, the department and the institution provided tacit permission for the toxic behavior and contributed to the normalization of the bullying.

Maria wondered what she could do, as an assistant professor, to address the situation; Stephanie was tenured, and no one else seemed willing to act. Maria began by writing a cease and desist letter, naming Stephanie's behavior as workplace bullying and outlining specific ways it violated campus policy. Maria also asked administrators and tenured faculty to respond to Stephanie's behavior. Despite these efforts by Maria and the faculty who agreed to speak out about Stephanie's bullying, the behaviors persisted. Maria continued to work toward a balance of protecting herself in the tenure process and addressing the bullying so as not to let it negatively affect her and those with even less power than she had.

As case #1 illustrates, bullying like Stephanie's seems to be attributed, in part, to a pattern of toxic behavior or departmental culture that has been allowed to develop and run unchecked in the past. Those who reported experiences with this kind of bullying noted behaviors such as a faculty member threatening to mark her favorite classroom with urine to dissuade others from using it, telling junior faculty or lecturers that they weren't allowed to speak in meetings or that they weren't allowed to visit each other's offices, using threatening body language, swearing loudly and slamming doors, making demeaning comments and giving excessive criticism,

and using physical intimidation and making threats of violence (interviews 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 14, 16, 19, 20, and 21).

Additionally, some of the interviewees who experienced this kind of bullying considered competition over resources to be a contributing factor (interviews 1, 3, 4, 5, 11, and 12). In a couple of the interviews (interviews 1 and 3), we learned about intense competition for administrative positions that provided faculty or instructors with teaching releases and some level of control over programs. In one of these instances, the bullies considered themselves to be better qualified for the WPA position than the WPA and used bullying tactics to try to claim the role for themselves. In these situations, bullies worked to undermine the target's authority, intimidate targets, verbally attack the target, threaten the target's job security—even in situations when the bully wasn't in a position of power over the target (interviews 1 and 3), and, in one case, physically threaten and attack the target (interview 3). In other cases, the competition was over control of department decisions and resources (interviews 4, 5, 11, and 12).

Interviewees had different ideas about how apparent the toxic behavior was to those within or outside of the department. One interviewee was unsure if everyone in the department knew the extent of the damaging behavior but noted that those outside of the department were aware of the bully's damaging behavior. Another person indicated the reverse—that those within the department recognized the behavior but those on the outside weren't likely to notice it. Regardless of whether everyone fully recognized the bullying, participants repeatedly mentioned the negative effect of the bully's behavior on their department or program. Many of these interviewees tried multiple approaches to respond to the bullying but finally left their institutions when their efforts failed. Some of the participants who did not leave their institutions did leave their administrative positions.

Recommendation #1: Document and Report Patterns of Bullying

As a response to the above kind of bullying, we turn to the power of documentation. Because there must be a pattern of behavior over time for it to fit the definition of bullying, targets should keep careful records of behavior, including dates, who was present, what occurred, the effect of the behavior in terms of one's ability to do their job and in terms of physical and emotional responses, and the relationship of the various instances. In addition to a report of the incidents, targets should also collect other types of materials, such as emails, when possible. For example, Maria saved and printed problematic or threatening emails from her bully as well as emails from other colleagues who noticed the abusive behavior in meetings and reached

out to her to offer support. She then used specific examples from this documentation when submitting her cease and desist letter. Of course, it can initially be hard to know whether certain instances count as bullying. In our research on the topic, we have heard people struggle with whether to define their experience as bullying, reporting that they only recognized it as such when someone else named or acknowledged it first (or they recognized the behavior as bullying as described in the NAQ-R survey), which is likely due to the normalization of bullying in our workplaces. Nonetheless, in an age of emails and electronic communication, it is often possible to retroactively document earlier experiences. Additionally, our research indicates that the bullying behavior won't stop without an intervention, so it is never too late to start collecting evidence.

This documentation can support targets if or when they file a claim against the bully. Moreover, the documentation can help targets counteract any claims the bully might make (as above when Stephanie claimed that she was being bullied). In Maria's case, she used her documentation to report Stephanie's bullying to the chair of the department, the dean of the college, and her faculty mentor. Additionally, a copy of Maria's cease and desist letter is included both in her own file and in Stephanie's file as protection should Stephanie try to sabotage Maria's tenure bid. However, Maria was unable to collect documentation of the unethical behavior against graduate students as the students were too afraid of retaliation to report their experiences officially. As such, we also recommend that WPAs investigate campus protocols for reporting behavior that provide vulnerable targets, such as graduate students, protection against retaliation by allowing them to remain anonymous. If no such reporting procedures exist, WPAs should work to create them.

At the University of New Mexico, graduate students can arrange a confidential meeting with the ombuds office in order to learn about the various avenues for reporting bullying. All people reporting violations are able to request anonymity; however, the university notes "making an anonymous report may limit a reporter's protection from retaliation and the University's ability to conduct a full and thorough investigation" ("Administrative Policies"). Additionally, if someone does file a report using their name, they are protected from retaliation by the campus "Whistleblower Protection Against Retaliation" policy, "regardless of whether or not an investigation confirms the misconduct" ("Administrative Policies"). We offer these specific examples from our university to help others look for similar policies at their own institutions and to provide example language should WPAs need to establish reporting procedures within their programs and departments.

Case #2: At the Pleasure of the Chair

When Scott began working as the WPA at a new institution, he quickly realized that working with the chair of the department was going to be a challenge. Scott faced persistent criticism and micromanaging; he was accused repeatedly of not doing his job, even though he was blocked from the resources he needed to do that very job. When he asked for prior assessment data for the program he was administering, he was told he couldn't have it or include it in any of his publications. When he was asked to teach the main course that was under his purview as an administrator, his colleagues would not allow him to use the curriculum that was already in place. And when he disagreed with a current practice, a graduate course was taken away from him as retaliation. The chair belittled Scott and the program repeatedly in meetings and in conversations with colleagues, which Scott described as public harassment. The chair was "unnecessarily mean-spirited" and cultivated negative feelings toward Scott among his colleagues through rumors and gossip, such as attributing new, unpopular policies (e.g., increased course caps and teaching loads) to Scott and the writing program even though they were dictated from above. Additionally, the chair expected Scott to bend to her will, treating him largely like a secretary and excluding him from discussions and meetings about his own program.

During his probationary review, Scott learned that the chair was only willing to put forward a positive vote (despite the overwhelming positive vote within the department) if he stepped down from his administrative role. Although Scott tried to get support from the dean, the dean responded that he was unwilling to get involved other than to take Scott out of the administrative position he was hired for as a form of protection from the bullying.

Scott turned to our field and his contacts at other institutions for support. Despite the bullying, he worked to do what he thought was best for the students in his program. These strategies helped, but Scott reported that the hostile work environment took a toll on his health and personal life, leaving him feeling demoralized and depressed. After being removed from his administrative position and watching the writing program move away from best practices in our field, Scott left the institution.

Case #2 represents a pattern of bullying between the WPA and the chair of the department that occurred in multiple interviews (interviews 5, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 20, and 22). This pattern often, but not always, occurs when the chair does not have WPA expertise. Sometimes this pattern of bullying was exacerbated by recent leadership changes (or attempted changes) in the program, department, or institution. Targets were told they

weren't able to do aspects of their WPA work (interviews 5, 7, 15, 17, and 20), had their authority undermined (interviews 5, 7, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 21), were verbally intimidated or attacked (interviews 7, 16, 17, 18, and 21), were excluded (interviews 10, 11, 16, and 20), and had their job security threatened (interviews 5, 7, 10, and 11). When writing programs are housed in English departments and the reporting lines dictate that the WPA reports to the chair, the authority and expertise of the WPA might go unrecognized as the chair makes decisions based on other factors and without sufficient knowledge of rhet-comp research.

Recommendation #2: Establish Written Policies and Position Statements

We maintain that institutional policies on bullying are one of the key resources for those who are experiencing or witnessing bullying in their workplaces. These policies allow targets to file complaints, document behavior using institutionally recognized language, and name their experiences in order to encourage active responses. Additionally, these policies offer a partial response to another common contributing factor to bullying: hierarchical reporting lines. When it comes to workplace bullying and violations of institutional policies, it is no longer necessary or appropriate to follow established reporting lines that work to keep issues within departments or colleges. Instead, many workplace bullying policies have information about how to report these experiences that involve the bully's supervisor as opposed to the target's supervisor.

At the University of New Mexico, the policy on bullying falls under the "Respectful Campus Policy" ("C09: Respectful Campus"). The statement identifies "destructive actions," including "bullying," which is divided into several categories. The statement reads as follows: "Bullying is defined by the University as repeated mistreatment of one or more individuals or a pattern of mistreatment of more than one individual. This mistreatment can include, but is not limited to" verbal bullying, nonverbal bullying, threatening actions, and anonymous bullying. The policy then instructs faculty to report destructive actions first by informal processes, suggesting that this approach is ideal over formal processes and written complaints. Informal processes are described as reporting the behaviors to the bully's supervisor. The formal process includes writing a complaint, "preferably within 60 calendar days" of the action that includes "clear specific allegations," "dates, times, locations, and witnesses," "factual descriptions," "indication of how each incident made the complainant feel," "documentary evidence," and "description of action the complainant or others have already taken." This

formal complaint should be submitted to the bully's supervisor (not the target's supervisor) or through a process that includes whistleblower protection. According to these guidelines, the supervisor will then conduct an investigation into the formal complaint (C09: Respectful Campus).

In addition to asking our institutions to have written policies about workplace bullying, we need to do the same within our national organizations. In 2011, NCTE published the *Resolution on Confronting Bullying and Harassment*. However, this statement is directed at the need to make classroom spaces, particularly at the K–12 level, safe environments for students that are void of bullying and harassment. The resolution does not currently address the bullying that teachers and staff themselves may face. And while CCCC recently published in 2016 the *Position Statement on CCCC Standards for Ethical Conduct Regarding Sexual Violence, Sexual Harassment, and Hostile Environments*, the statement is specific to sexual violence and sexual harassment with only vague reference to what constitutes "hostile environments." The term "bullying" occurs only once, as "sexual bullying," in a citation to define "sexual violence." However, we would term this sexual assault, not bullying, and sexual assault is protected at the federal level, while bullying is not. Therefore, the 2016 statement leaves bullying unaddressed.[5] In September 2019, the CWPA Executive Board published the "CWPA Position Statement on Bullying in the Workplace," which includes a description of characteristics, effects, and responses to workplace bullying as well as a list of additional resources (Elder et al.).

Organizational position statements provide individuals with another document to cite when addressing bullying on their own campuses. Moreover, our research shows that when people within our field bully others, there can be considerable consequences for the target—particularly when the bully has significant stature within the field and the target is concerned about possible career-ending retaliation if they speak out against it. This is the kind of unacceptable circumstance that we must act against. As a field and an organization, we can decide to respond to bullying when it happens, resist its normalization, and refuse to protect it with silence.

Case #3: Program Mobbing

Laura faced hostility directly in response to her expertise in rhetoric and composition. In department meetings, she was silenced, shouted at, and her expertise was demeaned. Her colleagues worked together in advance of meetings in order to outvote Laura and her rhet-comp colleagues. She attributed this behavior to fear about the changing makeup of the department—the growing influence of writing faculty and programs and the fear

that others would lose departmental power and, relatedly, tenure-track lines. When Laura spoke with the chair about the bullying, she was told to ignore it, that it wasn't that bad. The dean called it "departmental politics" and said that rhetoric and composition didn't constitute a protected class, so the behavior wasn't actionable. In short, there was no institutional response. However, for Laura (and, as she reports, many of her rhet-comp colleagues), this working environment was hostile, it negatively affected her health and her ability to do her job, and it put stress on her marriage. The situation was so intolerable that Laura considered leaving academia, feeling that it wasn't worth it. She was depressed and discouraged, so she—and many of the other rhet-comp faculty—left the institution.

Case #3 reflects what several interviewees (interviews 4, 5, 12, 17, and 20) described as competition between people and programs in relation to disciplinary differences, typically in a literature versus rhet-comp divide. In these instances, targets were excluded from departmental voting and decision making through systematic silencing (interviews 4, 12, and 20), were blocked from programmatic research (interview 5), were verbally intimidated and attacked (interviews 4 and 12), had their job security threatened (interview 5), were undermined (interviews 5, 17, and 20), and had aspects of their administrative work taken away from them (interviews 12, 17, and 20).

Recommendation #3: Reorganize as a Stand-Alone Writing Program or Department

In "The Professional *is* Personal: Institutional Bullying and the WPA," Amy Heckathorn describes at length the program mobbing she and her colleagues experienced at her institution. She goes on to argue that, at some point, there is "no…reasoning with a bully majority who has seen the power of its numbers," making change from within unlikely and even impossible (160). One solution, as Heckathorn suggests, is to separate from the English department and create a stand-alone writing program or department (see O'Neill and Schendel for a discussion of independent programs versus departments). In fact, many stand-alone programs came into being because of the kinds of program mobbing illustrated in case #3 and described by Heckathorn. In the introduction to the edited collection *A Field of Dreams: Independent Writing Programs and the Future of Composition Studies*, Angela Crow and Peggy O'Neill invoke Maxine Hairston's call for rhetoric and composition programs to claim their intellectual independence from the traditions, power, and practices of literature by "structurally separating from English" (2–3). As they explain,

> Some programs exist within English departments that have such skewed power relations that the composition and rhetoric professionals have little or no control over administrative, pedagogical, and staffing issues—a situation that compromises the ability to create a viable writing program. (6)

Theresa Enos also attributes these conflicts to the unique position of rhetoric and composition within English departments (Crow and O'Neill 3).

We recognize, as do Heckathorn and O'Neill, Crow, and Larry W. Burton, that transitioning to an independent program or department is not easy and is more of a long-term solution. Challenges to becoming independent, as originally detailed by Wendy Bishop and summarized here by Heckathorn, include the

> loss of potential 'English Studies' collaborations, concern that writing departments [will] be thought of as service-only disciplines, the vulnerability of any new academic unit (as well as the students and faculty that inhabit it), potential territoriality that might arise among other departments/programs, the question of what areas reside within a writing department, [and] the possibility that one is merely relocating departmental strife to a new location (168).

This list of challenges could, perhaps ironically, create conditions for additional bullying as changes in administration (Lester xi; Salin 1224–25) and potential competition over resources (Lester xi) or merit-based rewards (Salin 1223) are some of the risk factors for workplace bullying in higher education more broadly. In fact, some of these challenges—such as "territoriality" and "department strife"—might actually be euphemisms for workplace bullying.

However, the possible advantages of becoming an independent program or department are promising. They include increased governance over the writing curriculum (Bishop; Maid); increased control over hiring (Heckathorn); increased control of tenure and promotion criteria (Bishop; Everett and Hanganu-Bresch, "Introduction"); increased ability to distinguish writing studies from literary studies, particularly for our colleagues across campus (Everett and Hanganu-Bresch, "Introduction"); and improved program morale (Bishop). These gains in agency with the creation of an independent program or department can positively transform the experiences of all involved, including faculty, staff, students, and administration.

The case studies included in O'Neill, Crow, and Burton's aforementioned *A Field of Dreams*, and most recently in Justin Everett and Cristina Hanganu-Bresch's *A Minefield of Dreams: Triumphs and Travails of Independent Writing Programs*, demonstrate that the design of, and options for,

independent programs and departments are as diverse as the institutional contexts in which they are found. There is no one-size-fits-all approach with this recommendation, as the establishment, sustainability, and success of an independent program or department relies on a number of factors. However, the "triumphs and travails" described in the scholarship by others in our field who have done this work, as well as the Independent Writing Departments and Programs Association, can offer support with these efforts.

Case # 4: Bullying from Within the Field

The WPA at Natasha's institution, who was also the chair of the stand-alone writing program, methodically chipped away at Natasha's job satisfaction and responsibilities—or, in Natasha's own words, "inch by inch things were taken away from me." Natasha, a lecturer who was well-established in our field, was monitored in a number of ways as she was required to inform the WPA of her time on campus (metaphorically punching in and out without a timeclock) and was only allowed to take lunch at specific times and not with colleagues; was made to run her emails by the WPA before sending them out and to have the WPA review her conference presentations before she was allowed to present at national conferences; and was told what to include in her syllabus, what words to use when talking about writing, and was eventually not allowed to speak in meetings. Despite the fact that Natasha initially went along with these demands—in part because she was new to the institution—her bully intensely criticized and publicly demeaned her, both within her institution and at professional meetings within the field. Like many of our interviewees, Natasha equated her relationship with her bully to that of an abusive partner, as she was isolated and her worth (including her research and administrative work) was constantly attacked (even while her research was well-recognized and valued by the field). Because Natasha reported directly to her bully, she had little access to others who might have recognized the problem and intervened. When she did go outside of the traditional reporting lines in order to make a complaint to the dean and the human resources (HR) department, she learned that, while they were sympathetic, they ultimately supported the WPA. Finally, Natasha felt that, as a lecturer, she did not have the same structures of support available to her as she would have had if she were tenure-line faculty (e.g., faculty senate for issues of academic freedom). Her only way out was to leave the institution, which she did.

As case #4 illustrates, WPAs can be bullies themselves. Moreover, bullying within the WPA workplace sometimes occurs between two members

of the rhet-comp field—regardless of their position at their institution. One interviewee had a particularly hard time knowing how to navigate the bullying precisely because her bully was within her field, stating "it's a small enough field where if you're getting bullied by someone in the field, it's hard to negotiate that." Interviewees reported nervousness about how their bully might speak about them to others, and, when the bully was more established than them, they questioned their worth in the field based on the ways their bullies undermined their strengths. Oftentimes bullies claimed that the interviewee's scholarship was substandard or didn't count as research at all and, at times, suggesting that the interviewee find other kinds of institutions (community colleges or teaching colleges) to work at instead—a suggestion that was condescending to the target and to community colleges and teaching colleges. Although Natasha was already well-established in the field, other respondents who reported this kind of bullying were not. Regardless of one's level of experience in the field, the behaviors described in this case study are examples of bullying. As those reading this article likely know firsthand, we can teach people who are less experienced without demeaning them; we can offer feedback on the way they talk about a topic without taking away their right to speak; we can be supportive instead of abusive. And we can, of course, learn from them ourselves.

Additionally, Natasha's case—and cases #2 and #3—show that hierarchical reporting lines are problematic when it comes to bullying; in fact, scholarship on workplace bullying identifies reporting lines as a risk factor for bullying (Salin 2003). In our interviews, many respondents noted reporting lines as a barrier to addressing the bullying they experienced (interviews 1, 2, 4, 5, 10, 13, 14, 15, 18, 21, and 22). Without having other reporting lines available, the targets had few channels for responding to the bullying.

Recommendation #4: Provide Leadership Training

In response to Natasha's experiences, we recommend leadership training for present and future administrators. As Natasha's story illustrates, bullying is often perpetrated or enabled by administrators—whether they be WPAs, department chairs, directors of programs, deans, or others—and they have probably received little, if any, training before taking on these leadership roles. While we don't have control over the actions of institutions, we can offer leadership training for WPAs (and graduate students) through our field-specific organizations (like CWPA and CCCC) at conferences, in workshops, and in WPA institutes. It is important to encourage graduate students to participate in these trainings as well, and for institutions to

make it a part of graduate education programs, for it is in graduate school that bullying in the WPA workplace is often first experienced and normalized (see Matzke, Rankins-Robertson, and Garrett for a detailed discussion on this process). Additionally, graduate students need to be made aware of the kinds of situations they might face as WPAs or once they are working in the field—program mobbing of rhet-comp by literature, for example—as a way to help them more quickly recognize what is happening and develop possible avenues for response.

These trainings should provide people with information about what constitutes bullying, how to make sure they aren't being a bully, and how to respond if bullying happens in their programs. Trainings should also help WPAs consider how to support all of the constituents within their programs—students, (contingent) faculty, staff—by identifying multiple reporting lines and making those lines visible to everyone in the writing program. We also recommend that WPA leadership training programs include conflict resolution training that would prepare WPAs for difficult conversations about power and equity and cover scenarios in which litigious bullies create space for their destructive behavior by threatening lawsuits against individuals and departments.

Recommendation #5: Seek Support from Beyond the Institution

Natasha's case also demonstrates that HR departments are not always that helpful. Historically, HR policies and practices have subordinated the interests of the employee while privileging those of the business or institution (O'Riordan 4, 8, 10; "How to Become"). At most, HR is there to support senior management, therefore casting doubt on whether HR departments are either willing or able to assist individual targets with their complaints (King; Smith). Alternative HR models that may be more responsive to employee complaints include outsourcing HR to an independent third party or establishing HR as a hybrid, in which HR is left in charge at the institution but employees have the support of an independent, outside advisor (see Smith). Another resource that focuses on the individual instead of the institution is teacher unions. One of our interviewees turned to her union representative and was able to garner tremendous support through this avenue. The union rep sat in on meetings with her and helped her file a grievance against her bully, the chair of the department. Although this interviewee also participated in university-sponsored mediation, she found her experiences with the union representative to be more supportive and productive as she was able to ultimately have the chair step down from that position.

Where alternative HR models and unions are not an option, another possible avenue of support from beyond the institution is the WPA Consultant-Evaluator Service for Writing Programs. Part of the program's self-described mission is to "determine a program's unique strengths and weaknesses, help resolve local and individual problems, and improve programmatic effectiveness" ("WPA Consultant-Evaluator"). This service might act as a valuable resource for identifying the ills of a program, including bullying, and how to address them. Personally, we've found the consultants' reports to be persuasive to upper administration, carrying more ethos than our own arguments for change.

Conclusion

Across the interviews, there were patterns to the bullying, but there were also patterns to the ways people tried to cope with their experiences. Many interviewees noted that when faced with a hostile work environment, they turned to scholarship in the field about best practices in teaching writing and supporting students as a source of resilience. They reminded themselves they were beholden to their profession, not the department or the institution. When they were unable to enact the best practices of the field in their own departments, due to program mobbing or a chair of the department who was a bully, they turned to cross-campus relationships to find other avenues for their work. Some interviewees established relationships with and even became administrators of their centers for teaching and learning or divisions for faculty development. In addition to feeling supportive and offering some distance from the bullying, this kind of networking is also likely to be invaluable in the event programs want to work toward becoming their own departments at some point in the future. Participants also noted that they found allies at our field's conferences but lamented that they only happen once or twice a year.

We know personally how important it is to have allies or companions when facing bullying—we often mention to each other that, while we wish we never experienced the bullying, we are happy we had someone with whom to process the experiences and to validate our understanding of the situation. We also turned to each other to brainstorm possible responses and to find a way to be proactive in the face of workplace bullying. These conversations and brainstorming sessions led us to take several actions within our institution (described in some of the cases above) and to research the problem of bullying in the WPA workplace. Approaching these situations through our research helped us find agency, look for solutions, and connect with colleagues across the country, giving a voice to their experiences as well.

Because of this understandable impulse to find allies—particularly within our field and its scholarship—as a source of strength and sanity when faced with bullying, we encourage our field to research and write about bullying in the WPA workplace. We believe that, with more scholarship on the issue, targets of bullying could temper feelings of isolation and identify possible responses to their situations. Such scholarship could also offer inroads for changing cultural norms and practices that have thus far silenced concerns about bullying, for example when bullying is dismissed as institutional politics and working conditions or when targets —especially jWPAs—are blamed for not having the institutional experience and power to respond productively (Elder and Davila, "Bullying"). We believe that if we all commit our resources (time, brain power, journal space, time at conferences) to addressing bullying, we can rewrite our field's narrative about these destructive behaviors and help targets recognize they are not alone, that they don't need to simply learn to deal with it, or, worse yet, become bullies themselves. As one of our interviewees warned, "horrible situations change you."

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Notes

1. Initially, 77 respondents (62%) indicated directly they had experienced bullying in relation to their work in the WPA workplace. However, additional respondents reported elsewhere in the survey they had indeed experienced bullying behaviors, bringing the incident rate to 85% (Davila and Elder).

2. We revised the list to conform to American spelling conventions and removed "holiday entitlement" from a list of parenthetical examples.

3. As an additional measure of both validity and protection for our participants, we shared this article with all of the interview participants to confirm that we did not include details that could reveal their identities and to ensure we did not misrepresent their experiences.

4. This article uses pseudonyms throughout, in agreement with our IRB protocol (University of New Mexico #866852-2).

5. At the time of publication of this article, the authors are working with a CCCC task force to revise the existing 2016 resolution to include workplace bullying.

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Appendix: Negative Acts Questionnaire-Revised (NAQ-R), As Used in Survey

How many times have you experienced the following in the last 12 months? (1 = Never, 2 = Occasionally, 3 = Monthly, 4 = Weekly, 5 = Daily):

1. Someone withholding information which affects your performance.
2. Being humiliated or ridiculed in connection with your work.
3. Being ordered to work below your level of competence.
4. Having key areas of responsibilities removed or replaced with more trivial or unpleasant tasks.
5. Spreading of gossip and rumors about you.
6. Being ignored or excluded.
7. Having insulting or offensive remarks made about your person, attitudes or your private life.
8. Being shouted at or being the target of spontaneous anger.
9. Intimidating behaviors such as finger-pointing, invasion of personal space, shoving, blocking your way.
10. Hints or signals from others that you should quit your job.
11. Repeated reminders of your errors or mistakes.
12. Being ignored or facing a hostile reaction when you approach.
13. Persistent criticism of your errors or mistakes.
14. Having your opinions ignored.
15. Practical jokes carried out by people you don't get along with.
16. Being given tasks with unreasonable deadlines.
17. Having allegations made against you.
18. Excessive monitoring of your work.
19. Pressure not to claim something to which by right you are entitled (sick leave, travel expenses, etc.)
20. Being the subject of excessive teasing and sarcasm.
21. Being exposed to an unmanageable workload.
22. Threats of violence or physical abuse or actual abuse.

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The F-Word: Failure in WPA Work

Heather Bastian

This essay addresses failure in WPA work, specifically what happens when WPAs experience failure. I analyze WPA scholarship to expose how WPAs often struggle to accept and make sense of failure in their work. I then draw from recent efforts in writing studies to engage failure within the context of teaching to develop a heuristic for failure in WPA work.

WPAs are described as many things in scholarship: agents of change and activists (McLeod; Adler-Kassner); researchers engaged in reflective practice (Rose and Weiser; Brown, Enos, and Chaput); kitchen cooks, plate twirlers, and troubadours (George); theorists (Rose and Weiser); and managers (Bousquet). Rarely, if ever, are WPAs described as failures; yet four years into a tenure-track position, I was a failed WPA.

A brief history. In fall 2010, I started a tenure-track position as the only rhetoric and composition specialist at a small, private, comprehensive, regional college. I was to teach the standard 3/3 with the additional expectation that I would "work with adjuncts, the Director of the Writing Center, and other faculty to promote writing," as outlined in the job description. Essentially, I was the *de facto* WPA with no existing program and no reassignment time. By fall 2011, I negotiated a one-course reassignment on a semester-to-semester basis to develop a writing program focused on faculty development. To fulfill the job description, my idea was to support English department adjuncts while facilitating WAC/WID outreach through one-on-one meetings and workshops with departments and faculty across the disciplines. In spring 2012, I expanded my efforts to pilot a writing enriched curriculum (WEC) initiative (inspired by the WEC model out of the University of Minnesota) with the Department of Graduate Nursing while I continued WAC/WID outreach. This work continued through fall 2012 and spring 2013, and faculty demand was so great that I could not meet it. During this time, the vice president of academic affairs convened

a writing task force composed of faculty and staff. The task force recommended continuation of the faculty and curricular development work that I was doing with even more financial support. In fall 2013, I began a WEC project with the MBA program.

By spring 2014, my one-course reassignment was revoked due to budget concerns. The cut occurred with no consultation, no warning, and no fanfare. The program just ended, and I was no longer a WPA. Larger budget cuts occurred just one semester later. The Center for Teaching Excellence, the only other institutional outlet for faculty development, was eliminated. The Writing Center experienced a budget cut that forced them to reduce their staff. Overall, fifteen faculty and staff positions were eliminated. I may have lost a course reassignment and with it a program, but I retained my position.

Despite its short existence, the WAC program that I worked to develop experienced several successes according to conventional metrics. Faculty support and demand for the program was strong, and the task force recommended its continuation with more funding—no small feat. The curriculum in the graduate nursing program was transformed, and both the faculty and students were experiencing positive results. Additionally, this work led to three publications, two co-authored with nursing faculty, and one conference presentation with nursing faculty. Still, at the end of four years, neither these successes nor I could save the program, and I felt like a failed WPA.

Before proceeding, let me clarify. This article is not a rant against university administration nor is it a cautionary tale about jWPA work. I was promoted and tenured at that institution with no setbacks and am now happily a full-time, nonfaculty WPA at another institution by choice. It also is not a description or defense of my actions or decisions. I could have made other decisions, perhaps better ones that would have saved the program or maybe even worse ones that would have put a swifter end to it. I also want to acknowledge at the outset that my story ultimately is one of personal success, but this does not preclude my story also being one of failure. Success and failure do not have to be either/or experiences that exist in opposition to each other but rather can be both/and experiences that exist simultaneously and independently. My previous institution no longer has a WAC program, and I was part of this failure. My experience and the program at that moment in time will forever remain a failure and, with it, I a failed WPA, but this does not mean that I am not also a successful WPA.

In this article, I explore the complexities of failure in WPA work. I analyze WPA scholarship to examine what happens when WPAs, especially those new to the position, experience failure, large and small. As I hope

to demonstrate, WPAs often struggle to accept and make sense of failure in their work. I then draw from recent efforts in writing studies to engage failure within the context of teaching to develop a heuristic for failure in WPA work. Failure may be an inevitable part of WPA work, but it does not have to be nor should it be an aspect that WPAs internalize, hide, or fear.

The F-Word

Within the last decade, popular culture, the business world, and Silicon Valley have championed failure as a pathway for success. Popular self-help books with titles like *How to Fail at Almost Everything and Still Win Big* (Scott Adams); *Adapt: Why Success Always Starts with Failure* (Harford); and *Failing Forward: Turning Mistakes into Stepping Stones for Success* (Maxwell) encourage readers to channel their failures into successes. Similarly, popular business magazines including the *Harvard Business Review*, *Forbes*, and *Entrepreneur* regularly feature articles like "Strategies for Learning from Failure" (Edmondson), "5 Ways Fear of Failure Can Ruin your Business" (R. L. Adams); and "8 Ways Smart People Use Failure to Their Advantage" (Bradberry) that tout failure as essential to business success and provide strategies to make failure work for, not against, you.

Despite this newfound (if not faddish) appreciation for failure outside the walls of the academy, academic culture has a complicated relationship with failure. While some universities and colleges have developed student-focused programs that foreground the role of failure in learning (see Bennett), success remains the primary metric for evaluating and valuing faculty and staff whether that be in research, teaching, assessment, or administration. The 2016 viral phenomena of Johannes Haushofer's "CV of Failures" nicely demonstrates this tension. Taking up Melanie Stefan's suggestion to compile an "alternative CV of failures," Haushofer, an assistant professor of Psychology at Princeton, published his "CV of Failures" that lists rejections he received as well as awards, recognitions, and funding he did not get. Haushofer and his CV quickly gained fame as it was picked up by several national and international news organizations. The widespread admiration and recognition his "CV of Failures" garnered—as he writes, "This darn CV of Failures has received way more attention than my entire body of academic work"—suggests just how unusual it is for an academic to admit their own failures, let alone share them publicly and in writing. Faculty may tell students that failure is okay and even necessary for learning, but faculty rarely demonstrate or admit failure in their own work.

Failure occupies a precarious position in academic culture because academe relies on, as Judy Z. Segal calls it, "a professional discourse of success"

(175) in which scholars generally write and talk about their successes rather than their failures. In other words, success primarily drives and underlies academic work and scholarship. Segal points out that this discourse of success poses problems because "when we do not write about failure, we write in the *context* of a rhetoric of success, not associating one response to failure with any other" (175). Segal is particularly interested in failure when one attempts to "decenter" the writing classroom, but her words here highlight the limitation a discourse of success poses to the larger academic culture. Without attention to failure in academic professional discourse, failures are understood as isolated incidents that deviate from the context of success rather than connected experiences that constitute their own context and from which one can learn.

This discourse of success underlies much WPA scholarship with monographs and edited collections providing WPAs with guidance for how to be successful in their positions. Edward M. White's *Developing Successful Writing Programs* outlines theoretical and practical issues for WPAs to consider in order to make "decisions that are appropriate to individual campus situations" (xviii). Linda Myers-Breslin in *Administrative Problem-Solving for Writing Programs and Writing Centers Scenarios in Effective Program Management* brings together contributors who work through different scenarios to demonstrate WPA decision-making skills; as she writes, "each contributor provides a description of a problematic situation, as well as enough information about the institution and program to resolve the situation" (xv). Irene Ward and William J. Carpenter's *Allyn and Bacon Sourcebook for Writing Program Administrators* includes 23 essays to serve as "a resource for finding the right solution for a particular program or institution" (xi). Most recently, Bryna Siegel Finer and Jamie White-Farnham's *Writing Program Architecture: Thirty Cases for Reference and Research* asks contributors to outline the architecture or the "material, logistical, and rhetorical elements" (4) of their programs to provide "models and case studies of how writing programs of all types are structured and sustained" (23).

WPAs specifically interested in WAC programs (as I am) can turn to edited collections and articles to help make their WAC work a success. Susan McLeod and Margot Soven's edited collection *Writing Across the Curriculum: A Guide to Developing Programs* serves as a resource for WPAs to initiate or expand WAC programs and, in the words of Elaine P. Maimon in the preface, "defines terms, presents helpful suggestions, even provides models for useful documents (everything from workshop evaluation forms to contracts for visiting consultants), and in short, makes everyone's work easier" (vii). McLeod's later edited collection *Strengthening Programs for Writing Across the Curriculum* addresses how "second-stage"

WAC programs (programs that have been in existence for three or more years) can overcome common challenges, including Keith A. Tandy's piece on how to redesign a program when funding and support are reduced or run out. *WPA: Writing Program Administration* too features articles like Susan H. McLeod and Margot Soven's "What Do You Need to Start—and Sustain—a Writing-Across-the-Curriculum Program?", Jay Carson's "Ways to Connect WAC Programs to their Context," and Martha A. Townsend, Martha D. Patton, and Jo Ann Vogt's "Uncommon Conversations: How Nearly Three Decades of Paying Attention Allows One WAC/WID Program to Thrive" that provide WAC directors with concrete strategies and recommendations for success.

The discourse of success also pervades WPA narratives. As others have pointed out, scholarship frequently explores WPA work in terms of storytelling or personal narratives (e.g. Enos and Borrowman; George; Stolley). These stories tend to "paint us as the romantic hero who defends the program against administrative whims or the tragic martyr who sacrifices herself for the good of the program or her own ethical principles" (Stolley 22). Edward M. White's "Use it or Lose It: Power and the WPA" is a classic example in which White saves the WAC program from budget cuts by moving the program out of the School of Humanities and into the Office of Undergraduate Studies. Of course, not all narratives follow this storyline, but as Thomas P. Miller suggests, "our scholarship still includes more self-effacing narratives about how canny administrators managed adversity to make the best of a bad situation" (81). WPAs don't fail; they overcome.

To point out that a discourse of success underlies much WPA scholarship is not to say that WPAs do not seriously engage with challenges and problems that they face. In all of the examples cited above, scholars engage with challenging aspects of writing program work or directly address common problems that WPAs encounter. WPA scholarship certainly does not simplify or minimize challenges and problems, and no one would accuse WPAs of presenting a rose-colored view of their work.

Additionally, I am not suggesting that past WPA scholarship is not important, valuable, and needed. Without the guidance of seasoned WPAs, I, like many others, would certainly have been lost in my first position and the outcome could have been far worse. WPAs are fortunate to have such a robust body of scholarship. In fact, it is precisely because of this scholarship and my graduate school preparation that I felt at least somewhat prepared to tackle the many challenges and problems that awaited me as a new jWPA even though I was well aware of the many cautions against non-tenured WPA work (see, for example, Debra Frank Dew and Alice Horning's *Untenured Faculty as Writing Program Administrators* or Theresa Enos and

Shane Borrowman's *Promises and Perils of Writing Program Administration*). This is also perhaps why when I was faced with what seemed like a significant failure of losing a program that I was hired to create, I felt especially lost and ashamed.

Scholars already have explored limits of narratives in WPA scholarship, arguing for the inclusion of voices and stories from nonfaculty WPAs (Duffey), early career WPAs (Stolley; Rose), and liminal WPAs (Phillips, Shovlin, and Titus). The need for alternative narratives of WPA work is nicely articulated and demonstrated by Amy Ferdinandt Stolley in her recent *WPA* article in which she examines how WPA narratives "are more restrictive and disciplining than we might imagine" (19). She observes that:

> narratives and collective experiential knowledge can align neatly with certain aspects of our professional identities, but significant truth claims repeated in WPA narratives do not always match the experiences of some WPAs and can be at odds with the values and choices WPAs make. (20)

Stolley is interested in how the mantra of "Don't take an administrative position before tenure" emotionally affects early career WPAs who choose to follow this career path and seeks to open a space for narratives that explore this experience (20).

Extending Stolley's work and her focus on narratives, I am interested here in how the discourse of success that underlies much WPA scholarship and the lack of attention to failure emotionally affects WPAs, especially early career WPAs. The potential emotional impact of failing to address failure in scholarship has been observed by others. Thomas Newkirk, for example, finds that teaching of writing scholarship tends to focus on "upbeat success stories" that reflect ideal situations and circumstances (3). This poses problems, however, because "these ideals, to the extent that they are unrealistic, inflict psychological damage; they induce guilt, envy, and a sense of inadequacy" (Newkirk 3). Similarly, on reflecting on her CV, conference presentations, and scholarship, Melanie Stefan notes that "as scientists we construct a narrative of success that renders our setbacks invisible both to ourselves and to others . . . therefore, whenever we experience an individual failure, we feel alone and dejected." Both Newkirk and Stefan argue for making failure visible, with Newkirk suggesting writing teachers "create forums for telling failure stories" (6) and with Stefan suggesting scientists compose alternative CVs of failure, so that the negative emotional impact of failure is reduced. Without this visibility, negative feelings can flourish.

Recent attention to emotion in WPA work also speaks to the need to address failure in scholarship although it does so less directly than Newkirk and Stefan. Laura R. Micciche adopts Sarah Ahmed's concept of "stickiness" to explore how objects, like narratives, "amass affective associations" that in turn stick to and influence those who read them (27). In terms of WPA scholarship, Micciche examines how disappointment has come to characterize WPA work. She analyzes two WPA narratives to uncover how disappointment is inextricably linked to WPA working conditions, conditions in which WPAs may seem to hold power only to find out that they often have very little. While working conditions certainly contribute to WPA feelings of disappointment, another related source of disappointment might stem from WPA scholarship. In other words, WPA scholarship may contribute to feelings of disappointment by directly addressing them (as Micciche suggests) but also by emphasizing success or overcoming adversity. Disappointment may stick to WPAs as they read scholarship, but, I would argue, so too does success. Micciche argues that WPAs must consider more carefully "how disappointment is woven into the fabric of our work lives and how we can combat destructive disaffection by improving our working conditions" so that WPAs do not simply become accustomed to disappointment (90). I would add that WPAs also need to directly address failure in their work as another way to engage disappointment and combat disaffection.

One can find glimpses of the emotional impact that the lack of attention to failure creates in WPA scholarship. Finer and White-Farnham begin their recent collection *Writing Program Architecture* with an email from Shevaun Watson regarding her chapter revision. She expresses concern about including her chapter in the collection because the changes to the first-year writing program that she discusses in her chapter will most likely be undone by budget cuts and she has since accepted a WPA position at a different institution. After communicating this news, she writes:

> So revising this [chapter] has entailed a very heavy heart. I think there is valuable information in what I was able to accomplish here, but it was fleeting and will go out as quick as it came in. Surely, that cannot be the "lesson" here, which is why I don't know if I want this included in the final publication. (3)

For Finer and White-Farnham, Watson's email highlights the importance of attending to a writing program's architecture—its "material, logistical, and rhetorical elements"—in order to "disentangle [the WPA] role from the program itself" and "to strengthen [WPA] positions in times of turmoil or in the face of dismantling" (4). While Finer and White-Farn-

ham's reading of Watson's email is certainly valid and important, I read something additional in her email, a hesitation (and even concern) to share a change that most likely will fail. As Finer and White-Farnham point out, the fault of the failure wasn't necessarily with Watson herself but rather the result of decisions outside of her control. Still, Watson's search to find a lesson in her experience beyond its fleeting nature and her questioning of whether that alone is a valuable and viable lesson speaks to the limits of the discourse of success. Paul Cook in "Notes from the Margins: WAC, WID, and the Politics of Place(ment)" finds himself in a different situation as a jWPA at a small, rural liberal arts college but with a similar outcome. As he reflects on his experience, he recalls what drew him to the position: "I saw an opportunity to have a lasting, positive impact on an institution, a chance to leave my mark." What he finds, however, is that "ongoing material, pedagogical, and institutional challenges" are too much to overcome so he accepted a position elsewhere as a non-WPA. He sums up this decision as such: "In short, I felt as though *I* had failed" (emphasis added). What strikes me about Cook's rendering of his experience is the impulse I think many WPAs feel, a chance to leave a mark, to affect positive change, and I identify with Cook's subsequent feelings of personal failure when that does not come to fruition. Cook examines his experience to reveal "larger concerns about WAC/WID's vulnerability in rural SLACs, [small liberal arts colleges]" but, importantly, he ultimately seems to understand and position the failure to effect change in that context as his alone.

What Watson's and Cook's words highlight, for me, are the ways in which WPAs struggle to accept and make sense of failure in their work as well as their tendency to internalize failure (and to fear that others will associate it with them). I too struggled to understand my experience and felt uncomfortable and hesitant to share it with others. I worried what the loss of a writing program would say to others about me as a WPA and even as an educator and scholar. When WPAs do not experience success, do not overcome adversity, or do not make the best of a bad situation, where can they turn to help make sense of these experiences?

A Heuristic for Failure

Writing studies scholars have recently turned their attention to failure within the context of teaching writing (Alvarez; Carr; Gross and Alexander; Inoue; Segal). Noting the relative dearth of attention to failure within the field, these scholars argue that failure is valuable for teaching and learning and, as such, warrants a place within the classroom but also within scholarship. While these scholars focus on failure as a pedagogical strategy,

their work provides a basis from which to develop a heuristic for failure in writing program administration.

Failure seems to be useful for at least two reasons: it opens a space for reflection and for critique of structures and norms. John Dewey in *How We Think* argues for the role of failure in reflective thought. For Dewey, reflective thought is an important educational aim, and in his five stage process, he addresses the value of failure in the fifth stage, testing the hypothesis by action. He writes:

> but a great advantage of possession of the habit of reflective activity is that failure is not *mere* failure. It is instructive . . . [failure] either brings to light a new problem or helps to define and clarify the problem on which he has been engaged. (114)

Dewey argues that failure should be part of the educational process, allowing for further reflection in which a person seeks to understand the failure and then make use of this knowledge. While Dewey's emphasis on the role of reflective thought in learning and his rendering of failure within it are certainly valuable, they rely on an understanding of education as "a forward-moving, product-oriented march toward some mark of achievement" (Carr). Within this formulation, failure is positioned as a step or movement toward success, toward resolution, rather than embraced in its own right.

Embracing failure in its own right provides for a different kind of reflective space, as Allison Carr explores in "In Support of Failure." When people allow themselves to dwell in failure and experience it in its own terms rather than in relation to success, failure, Carr argues, can be a "*deeply felt,* transformative process." She highlights the value of this understanding of failure and her proposed "pedagogy of failure" by drawing from her own experience of failing to complete a written assignment as a Ph.D. student. In positioning herself as a failure in the weeks following this experience, Carr was able to slow down, to notice, to pay attention, and "to let myself feel the pain of failure and to find a way to make that work for me." It is important to distinguish here that Carr makes failure work for her as a person rather than for the situation. Failure "works" for Carr not as a way to succeed in a specific situation or project but instead as a way to see herself as a person. As a result, Carr embraces and advocates for the transformative power of failure, finding ways to "*do it better,* to stay there longer, to take it on as an epistemological choice" because it allows her to "ask myself how I got to where I am, where I am trying to go, and if there is maybe somewhere else I should be instead. I ask myself how I am feeling and why I am feeling that way." These self-reflective questions differ from the kind of reflection that Dewey encourages as the impetus and goal are not on outward prog-

ress but rather on inward feelings of the moment, questioning where they come from, why did they come from there, and do I even want to be here?

Other scholars find that failure allows insight into structural power dynamics. Daniel M. Gross and Jonathan Alexander advocate for frameworks for failure in their critique of the *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing*. Like Carr, Gross and Alexander encourage educators to consider the value of failure on its own terms rather than placing it in relation to (and lesser than) success. Tracing the roots of the *Framework* to positive psychology, they find the success-oriented nature of the document to be problematic in that by focusing on success in the classroom and the positive emotions associated with it, the *Framework* leaves little room for failure and the negative emotions that often come with it. However, failure and negative emotions, they argue, can and should play a crucial role in education. They draw from queer theory's engagement with failure and negative emotion, especially Judith Halberstam's *The Queer Art of Failure*, to argue that "unhappiness, dissatisfaction and even failure might serve as entry points to critique the power structures and normalizing discourses" (288). As they further explain:

> The cost of forgetting negative emotion, even the experience of failure, is high. Success feels good but it does not reorient us against unjust norms. Success, as it trumps personal failure, can also numb us to failures that are structural. (290)

For Gross and Alexander, failure provides a critical lens, shifting the locus of failure (and success) from the individual to the structures and norms in which he or she operates.

Building on Carr and Gross and Alexander's work, I propose here a heuristic to help WPAs make sense of failure. It incorporates the following elements: (1) failure exists outside of success, (2) failure is an important term, (3) failure causes negative yet worthwhile emotions, and (4) failure is valuable. While I address these four elements separately below, I see them as working together as a process and not necessarily experienced in a particular order. I draw on my own firsthand experience to illustrate the value of the heuristic for WPAs, but I believe other WPAs whose experiences of failure or circumstances differ slightly or significantly from my own still will find this heuristic to be valuable. Failure in my case was primarily the result of institutional decisions that were outside of my control rather than decisions that I made regarding the program, and my job security and professional reputation were not on the line and no one was calling into question my personal fitness for my position. My personal circumstances at the time also allowed for much flexibility in terms of career paths and

geographical location. This was, in many ways, an ideal failure situation. The heuristic, however, is intended to be dynamic and responsive, enabling a WPA to make sense of their own experiences of failure within their individualized professional and personal circumstances. Even WPAs who have a similar experience of failure as my own may not respond to the heuristic in the same ways that I did. WPAs will have different responses to the heuristic that will lead them to different places but all who adopt it would take failure as their focal point to find a way to make failure work for them.

One element of the heuristic is that WPAs situate their understanding of failure outside of success. Both Carr and Gross and Alexander stress the importance of understanding failure in its own terms rather than positioning it as a pit stop to success or in opposition to success. As Gross and Alexander remind us, success is not contextless—it is defined in accordance with existing structures and norms, and, as such, success may have positive implications for the individual but may have negative consequences for others. In other words, success is not all good all the time nor is failure all bad all the time. Additionally, success does not have to be the all-consuming goal or resolution for every experience, as failure offers another valid and valuable experience.

Allowing the failure of the writing program to exist outside of the context of success was hard for me and took time. The only future I had imagined was one with a successful program, perhaps not as successful as I would have liked but certainly not a failure. So when I first received news about my course reassignment being revoked, my first thoughts were "what did I do wrong" and "how did I let this happen?" I was searching for what I did that kept the program from being a success. It was not until the next semester when the other larger budget cuts occurred that I began to consider that a successful writing program may not have been possible regardless of what I did. At the same time, I knew that the program still did a lot of good for faculty and students even as a failure. Reconciling these two seemingly opposed thoughts challenged me to complicate my understanding of failure as bad and success as good. It also allowed me to use and even embrace the word failure to describe the program without the internal judgement that I was a bad WPA despite the fact that I failed to save it.

Another element of the heuristic is that WPAs need to use the term failure. Instead of recasting failure as a challenge, opportunity, or even a problem or disappointment, WPAs, at times, need to resist this impulse and just let experiences or projects be failures and they need to call them that at least internally (they need not always or ever do so privately or publicly with others). While positioning failure outside of success was hard for me, resisting the urge to recast my experience in more optimistic terms was relatively

easy. As I mention above, my course reassignment was revoked suddenly and without warning. I, quite frankly, was caught off guard because from my perspective, the program was going strong: faculty supported it and the task force endorsed it. The extreme disconnects between my understanding of the situation and the budgetary reality coupled with the resulting feelings of anger and hurt allowed me to more easily cast the program as a failure than if I was more prepared for the budget cut or if faculty support was wavering or inconsistent. It also was relatively safe for me to name the program a failure since my own personal qualifications for the job were not under attack.

I found immense power in naming my own experience a failure. Hearing myself say "failure" either with others in private or in my own self talk allowed me to slow down, like Carr describes, and resist the impulse to keep moving forward with this particular program. To be clear, using the term failure did not mean that I was leaving WPA work and my experience entirely behind me but rather that I was letting go of this version of the program at this institution at this point in time. Failure allows for (but does not dictate) a finality that challenge, opportunity, problem, and disappointment do not, and in some situations, a sense of finality can be incredibly freeing. For me, failure gave me permission to discontinue all WPA-related work as I returned to a full teaching load when I lost funding instead of doing more or the same amount of work with less. When faculty contacted me for assistance (and they continued to do so), my message was simple and straightforward: "I'd really like to help you, but the College has discontinued support for my work with faculty." While this was a potentially risky message as a pre-tenure faculty member, it allowed me to retain some power over my workload in a situation where I had very little power otherwise.

Another element of the heuristic is that WPAs need to acknowledge and grapple with the emotions that accompany failure. Both Carr and Gross and Alexander encourage readers to dwell in the negative emotions of failure as those emotions can provide insight—for Carr that insight is into self and for Gross and Alexander that insight is into structures and norms. Negative emotions might not feel good, but they should not be ignored or rushed past as simply unpleasant interruptions. Allowing oneself to feel negative emotions prompts self-reflection and ideological critique that can be used in worthwhile ways.

In my case, losing the program hit me incredibly hard. I was profoundly sad, hurt, and angry and continued to be so for well over a year (and maybe even still a little to this day). While I did not openly express these emotions to colleagues, I felt them deeply every day and especially when faculty would contact me for assistance. Staying with these emotions while

unpleasant and difficult allowed me to start asking after a few months, "why do I still feel *so* terrible?" rather than "what did I do wrong?" or "what mistakes did I make?" Focusing on my feelings instead of my actions prompted introspection on my own commitments, goals, and values. I discovered that my career and academic interests were shifting from first-year writing to WAC work. When I began this position, much of my WPA work was focused on first-year writing and working with adjuncts in this course, but over time, first-year writing needed little attention because the English department was hiring fewer adjuncts due to declining enrollments and WAC work needed much more attention because disciplinary faculty were requesting more assistance. In my WAC work, I deeply valued the connections I made with faculty and simply enjoyed experiencing other disciplinary ways of knowing, teaching, and communicating. WAC work allowed me to flex my own disciplinary and pedagogical knowledge in new and exciting ways that had the potential for a much wider impact than first-year writing and my own teaching. With these realizations, my commitments to faculty and curricular development across the disciplines rather than solely in first-year writing came into a clear focus for the first time.

This reflective look inward was paired with a critical look outward at the "power structures and normalizing discourses" in which I was working (Gross and Alexander, 288). Despite my best efforts and at that point in time, the program's "architecture," in Siegel and White-Farnham's words, could not support or sustain the kind of work I was doing and wanted to do. The institution had other priorities that did not align with my own commitments, and I did not see those priorities aligning with my own in the near future. This understanding allowed me to shift the failure from one that I "owned" as mine alone to one that was the result of the confluence of complex factors, both personal and contextual. It also brought me to a personal decision—stay at an institution whose values and priorities did not currently match my own but may in the future or find another institution whose priorities and values were more closely aligned with my own in the present.

My critical gaze outward extended beyond the physical institution to the larger academic context in which I worked. The lure of tenure required me to split my time between teaching, research, administration, and service yet perform in each area at levels in ways that were simply unsustainable for me, and I resented the "the grin and bear it" pre-tenure attitude I adopted out of fear of reprisal. I began to question what success and failure looks like and requires of people in tenure positions especially those that also carry administrative duties. This questioning continued as I looked for positions in other institutions. I was drawn to non-tenure track, full-time administrative positions in WAC programs, as they aligned most clearly

with my commitments and allowed me to exit a tenure system that I was beginning to question and in which I no longer wanted to participate. While I am still working through many of the issues I raise here and do not pretend to have the answers to what I see as larger systemic concerns, embracing the emotions of failure provided me with a clarity of purpose and focus that I had not yet experienced at that point in my career.

The final element of the heuristic is that WPAs need to value failure. Admittedly, valuing failure is difficult and even feels counterintuitive given larger cultural and academic emphases on success, but, as I hope to have demonstrated above, failure can be a "*deeply felt*, transformative process" (Carr) that exists outside the context of success. By embracing failure as a process, I came to see its value not only for me as a person and WPA but also for a program. Failure allowed me as a person to clarify my own values, commitments, and goals and identify the ways in which they were or were not aligned with the program, its institutional context, and the larger academic contexts. Failure allowed me as a WPA to resist internalizing failure and seeing it as solely bad by providing me with another lens through which to analyze and understand the contexts in which I work and writing programs operate. And failure allowed the program to stop existing and to stop trying to get by with less. Failure, just as much as success, allows WPAs to prioritize and make decisions about a program, which, at times, means not taking on more, cutting back instead of adding, failing instead of succeeding. Failure in this light is not just an inevitable aspect of WPA work but also a necessary one.

I recount my experience above not to dictate how others should use the heuristic or how others should respond to failure but rather to illustrate how the heuristic worked for me in my particular situation. I encourage other WPAs to adopt this heuristic for private use in their own individual practice to help them make sense of their own experiences with failure. A WPA who is faced with a failure similar to my own but does not have the option or flexibility to leave the institution or position can still benefit from the heuristic as it allows insight into how they want to move forward within the current constraints. Or a WPA in a situation similar to mine may experience and respond to the emotions of failure differently than me to discover a deep commitment to the institution or community and work toward incremental change. Or a WPA who is facing criticisms because of professional decisions they made can benefit from slowing down and engaging with the emotions of failure, as Carr does, to explore how they got there, where they want to go, and where they do not want to go. By adopting failure as an important and valuable term, allowing failure to exist outside the context of success, and dwelling in the emotions of failure, WPAs can

make failure work for them regardless of why the failure occurred or the circumstances surrounding it.

I also encourage WPAs to adopt more public uses of this heuristic in scholarship. In doing so, I recognize that not all (and perhaps not most) WPAs can openly and publicly admit failure without facing significant consequences, including denial of tenure and loss of employment or other career opportunities. But when those who have less to risk make failure public, they are helping to break its stigma and normalize it so that WPAs do not inwardly suffer when success does not await them. This is, in part, why I am sharing my story of failure and proposing a heuristic for failure for WPAs. I now am in a full-time nonfaculty administrative position where I am evaluated based on my work at this institution, not my past work at another institution. This position is situated within an office in academic affairs, not a department, where I work with other administrators engaged in similar tasks. I may experience some professional consequences for sharing my story of failure, but the risk is relatively small because, as I acknowledge above, my story is also one of success. I hope others who can share their stories of failure will do so too; but if not, I hope my story of failure and this heuristic can provide other WPAs, especially those who are new to the position, nonfaculty, or pre-tenure, with some comfort and guidance when they encounter failure. The failure in my story was significant, but WPAs encounter little failures (and successes) every day. In many ways, WPAs are masters of failure, and they should embrace this role.

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Student Expectation Auditing and Mapping: A Method for Eliciting Student Input in Writing Program Assessment

Mathew Gomes and Wenjuan Ma

In writing studies, localism is the widely held belief that writing assessments should be, among other things, locally sensitive and locally controlled (CCCC Committee on Assessment, 2006/2014). Practices of local control include adapting frameworks and instruments for local contexts, validation inquiries, and methods such as dynamic criteria mapping (Broad, 2003; Broad et al., 2009). While these practices may involve local administrators and instructors, scholarship indicates a need for additional student involvement in locally controlled writing programs. Therefore, this article offers the method of student expectation auditing and mapping (SEAM). SEAM identifies student expectations for writing courses by (1) auditing aims, (2) analyzing and mapping aims, (3) surveying students, and (4) comparing expectations to other aims and outcomes. We demonstrate our use of SEAM within a first-year writing (FYW) program and argue the method can help writing programs coordinate the aims of diverse writing program participants. We also imagine implications for teaching and professional development.

Localism is not a new value in writing program administration or assessment discourse (Serviss, 2012), but it is a primary concern of many recent conversations about writing assessment. The CCCC position statement on writing assessment (CCCC Committee on Assessment, 2006/2014) embodies the commitment to localism and asserts the principle that "the best assessment for any group of students must be locally determined and may well be locally designed." Today the principles of local sensitivity and local control are widely accepted in writing studies (Gallagher, 2010, 2014; O'Neill, Moore, & Huot, 2009; Huot, 2002, 1996), and form a significant basis for current articulations of best practices in writing program administration and assessment. For example, in their volume on writing program

assessment *Very Like a Whale*, White, Elliot, and Peckham (2015) argued that localism (along with sustainability and professionalism) should be one of the central tenets upon which writing programs should be built and assessed.

While advocacy for localism in writing studies has propelled many new developments in research, some have challenged over-attention to locally centered research. Bromley, Northway, and Schonberg (2013), for example, suggested that focusing on the local can come at the expense of generalizable knowledge. They cited survey responses of clients from writing centers in different institutional contexts, which revealed considerable overlap in the issues and conditions faced by those writing centers. Similarly, Yancey (2012) has shown that some major epistemic developments in writing studies have resulted from cross-institutional research partnerships, and disciplinary knowledge networks. Rather than emerging from immediate local needs, these developments have been in response to "self-created" exigences (p. 477). Self-created exigences are important, permitting systematic and sustained lines of disciplinary inquiry and advancing disciplinary notions of best practice. Nevertheless, localism and generalizable knowledge need not exist at odds with one another; as some have observed, the administration and assessment of writing programs are always experienced locally—that is, by us, by our colleagues, the people in our institutions, and our students (Elliot & Perelman, 2012; Gallagher, 2014). Likewise, we believe that decisions made in response to local exigences can and often do resonate widely with scholars and teachers across disciplines interested in writing. That local knowledge has value is, for us, unquestionable; rather, we suggest more fruitful questions ask from whom in our local communities we elicit knowledge in the practice of localism. By what practices may we come to know what we know about each of our local scenes?

In this article, we argue there is a need to systematically elicit students' expectations for the purposes of writing program development, at the risk of permitting partial and reductive visions of our local settings guide administrative decisions. To that end, we offer a method to help writing programs identify students' expectations for writing courses and to better localize curriculum and assessments. This method, which we call Student Expectation Auditing and Mapping (SEAM), has helped us identify categories of expectations students have for first-year writing (FYW) courses at one institution. More broadly, we offer SEAM to a growing repertoire of strategies writing programs can use to build locally responsive and meaningful course experiences.

In reviewing writing studies scholarship about practices of localization, we show there is little evidence students are systematically contributing

to the creation of local knowledge about writing programs. Therefore, the SEAM method can help writing programs build more robustly localized writing programs. The SEAM method elicits student expectations for the purpose of program and professional development, and it emerged out of our study of students' expectations at Michigan State University (MSU). While our findings may not apply to every writing program, we believe the SEAM method can be taken up by other writing programs. We conclude with some implications SEAM research had for MSU and offer recommendations for how other writing programs can use SEAM as part of a repertoire of research strategies for localizing writing curricula and assessment.

Practices of Localization and the Need to Identify Student Expectations

How do writing programs practice localism? Some common practices include adapting frameworks and instruments to local contexts, investigating the validity of emergent methods within those contexts, and mapping understandings of local values. Many of these practices show considerable alignment with the principles outlined by O'Neill, Moore, and Huot (2009) that assessments should be "site based, locally controlled, context sensitive, rhetorically based, accessible, and theoretically consistent" (p. 57). Nevertheless, we agree with West-Puckett (2016) that in practice, localization "often stops just short of classroom control and just short of engaging all teachers and all students in active, participatory, and critical negotiation of assessment paradigms" (p. 128). We also observe that writing research infrequently enlists student participation in writing program assessment; yet, there are indications that eliciting student input in writing program assessments could lead to more meaningful and transferable writing experiences (Eodice, Geller, & Lerner, 2016).

Adapting Frameworks

As one form of localization, writing programs may adapt broad frameworks for their local contexts. For example, Kelly-Riley and Elliot (2014) have found administrators can successfully tailor the WPA Outcomes Statement to particular contexts. Kelly-Riley and Elliot describe a localization model which treats the Outcomes Statement as a heuristic "to plan their classroom activities, structure the types of writing assignments students would do, and serve as a formative feedback vehicle for response to student writing" (p. 93). Their findings echo international research, which has found universities can successfully localize the Common European Framework for Reference (CEFR) for Writing (University of Cambridge, 2011). Localization, in

these contexts, means applying an externally articulated writing construct, and articulating local applicability through professional development with input from WPAs and from local instructors. This model of localization also suggests the possibility of successfully straddling the tensions between local exigences and disciplinary notions of best practice. Nevertheless, in this form, students play an indirect role in assessment; they are framed as recipients of a curriculum and not as participants in its creation.

Validating Instruments, Methods, and Decisions

Site-based validation inquiries represent another, related form of localization. In this strand of scholarship, researchers examine emergent assessment methods within local contexts. For example, Ramenini (2013) described the localization of automated essay scoring (AES) by studying customized scoring models built by the Criterion Online Writing Evaluation Service. While many have expressed opposition to AES for high-stakes assessment decisions (Haswell & Wilson, 2013), Ramineni found evidence prompt-specific e-rater models built by Criterion and tailored for a specific university performed better than generic prompts, and were sufficiently related to trained human raters to warrant use in a FYW program. Similarly, Gere et al (2013) have demonstrated some evidence that pairing a writing task with the directed self-placement (DSP) model at the University of Michigan leads to more valid placements. Significantly, the writing task the authors describe is well-aligned to the local writing construct.

In each of these cases, localization happens when writing programs develop locally tailored instruments and revise those instruments as necessary to validate local decisions (e.g., placement). Again, however, student prerogatives have little direct impact on the nature of the program or its learning goals. Even with techniques that create opportunities for student agency, such as DSP, much of the student prerogative toward writing is ignored, in favor of validating larger programmatic decisions.

Articulating Local Values, Goals, and Outcomes

Another strand of localization discourse deals with methods for negotiating the values of local stakeholders and writing program participants (Kelly-Riley, 2015; Colombini & McBride, 2015; Good, Osborne, & Birchfield, 2012; Barlow, Liparlu, & Reynolds, 2007). Most notably within this strand, scholarship about the DCM method (Broad, 2003; Broad et al., 2009; Scott & Brannon, 2013), illuminates some of the benefits and difficulties associated with trying to adequately represent local values and beliefs about writing. According to Broad's (2003) recommendations, the DCM

process asks small groups of local writing program participants to review samples of student texts and describe textual features that would impact their evaluation of those texts. The resulting dynamic criteria map plots general qualities that affect the evaluation of writing (e.g., ethos) and textual features or characteristics that contribute to these qualities (e.g., style, tone, diction, dialect). Crucially, DCM offers a formal method for articulating and documenting the local values that can contribute to curriculum and assessment.

However, as Scott and Brannon (2013) have shown, DCM runs the risk of offering only a partial picture of local values by collapsing divergent values into reductive consensus statements and misrepresenting the varied interests of diverse local participants. Scott and Brannon focus on how differences in the institutional positionalities of TT and NTT faculty inform differentiations in what they value about student writing; we are similarly critical about the role of students in DCM research. With a few notable exceptions (see Adler-Kassner & Estrem, 2009; Detweiler & McBride, 2009), DCM processes tend to exclude students, and none dedicate any systematic documentation of students' interests or values. Without active consideration of students' perspectives, we argue, any construction of local values will be incomplete.

Student Perspectives Are Important

While students are often absent from processes of writing program localization, student input could help create locally effective writing programs. Indeed, Gallagher (2011) has argued that both students and faculty should generate, rather than simply exist as targets of, writing assessments, including those that contribute to programmatic development. As he writes, "being there matters" (p. 451). Additionally, Eodice, Geller, and Lerner (2016) showed that graduating seniors found their writing assignments most meaningful when those assignments offered opportunities for agency or choice, or when they were able to make connections to their extracurricular lives and their future goals. While the authors presented evidence that eliciting student perspectives in shaping a writing curriculum or program could also support more meaningful learning experiences, they nevertheless indicated students had few opportunities to engage in such "meaningful" writing. This latter finding is unfortunate, though also perhaps symptomatic of students' absence in discussions about program and curriculum design.

We therefore offer the SEAM method, which is designed to articulate students' expectations for their writing courses. In this article, we use

the term student expectations to name students' beliefs about the goals that should be pursued in their writing courses, after having taken those courses. We argue that student expectations are especially important given the relatively low power afforded to students as institutional subjects. Additionally, our deliberate focus on students helps to counterbalance a scholarly focus on faculty input that exists in literature on local assessment.

SEAM: The Big Picture

We began researching students' expectations for FYW courses at MSU in spring 2015. Though Matt had taught courses in the FYW program for several years, his understanding of students' expectations was somewhat limited by what he could learn from questioning students informally in his own courses. Matt thus began formally interviewing students enrolled other FYW courses. Over several semesters and after sustained involvement with multiple committees and assessment efforts, Matt noticed some intersections and some differences between students' expectations, and the aims put forward by other local participants and stakeholders in the FYW program. By fall 2016, Matt had begun discussing with Wenjuan—a statistician in the Center for Statistical Training and Consulting—about how we might identify students' expectations more broadly across the program, and understand whether differences existed between students enrolled in FYW courses and those enrolled in basic writing (BW) courses. Our collaboration led us to visually map students' expectations so that we could articulate a more nuanced understanding of our local values and to develop a survey that would help us understand the magnitude of those expectations among students in FYW and BW courses.

Student expectation audit and mapping (SEAM) is a method for identifying and representing student expectations for writing course experiences. As a form of writing program research, SEAM can help develop locally responsive writing programs. The SEAM method involves first auditing the aims of local writing program participants, including students. Next, researchers should analyze and map expectations, and follow up with a larger group of students. Once identified, researchers, teachers and administrators can compare student expectations with writing program outcomes, and articulate relationships between differing aims. We argue this approach can help writing programs revisit their aims and can help individual instructors prompt reflection and articulation among students. Finally, we recommend writing programs use SEAM recursively to counterbalance moments of synthesis and reduction with moments of growth and expansion.

SEAM focuses specifically on students so that writing programs might develop more robust and nuanced understandings of local aims. This is because SEAM assumes students, like NTT or TT faculty members, have an institutional subjectivity with interests affected by common material relationships to the university, learning opportunities, and resources. Additionally, SEAM assumes students' expectations may be identified without needing to be treated as proper outcomes. These assumptions help produce an element of dissensus and promote "an ongoing, continuous interrogation of, from our vantage point, the mystification that there are 'universal' standards for, and values that can be applied to, student writing" (Scott & Brannon, 2013, p. 294). SEAM can help researchers identify general classes of student expectations; however, we do not mean to suggest that students are all the same, or that they all have the same expectations. In the collection and analysis of data, we urge others to anticipate the effect of local identity formations on students' expectations, including race (Inoue, 2012), sexuality (Alexander, 2016), national origin, gender, languages, and any local institutional classifications. Such information will undoubtedly prove useful for some institutions to further explore local instances of diversity, and possible differences in expectations.

Nevertheless, a single round of SEAM research will collapse some subjective distinctions in the service of making some generalizations about students' expectations. The key, we suggest, is to understand the identifications SEAM makes are necessarily incomplete, and to treat SEAM as a recursive method. Over time, writing programs can identify student expectations, and in any given round, they may focus on the differences that may exist among specific groups of students. Fundamentally, the goal of SEAM research is to grow the field of positive consequences associated with writing programs, and offer a systematic method for articulating relationships between these aims. SEAM expands the field of positive consequences through an accordion-like motion: writing programs may accumulate aims during the audit, and subsequently narrow that field through analysis, follow-up, and comparison.

SEAM thus plays out as a recursive process of documenting, synthesizing, and refining writing program knowledge about students' expectations for writing courses and includes four distinct phases: (1) an audit of possible expectations, (2) analysis of those expectations, (3) follow-up with students, and (4) comparison of students' expectations to other educational aims. Figure 1 illustrates the SEAM method and offers recommendations for each of the four phases.

1. Audit Program Participants

- **Talk to a diverse group of students** about their expectations of and experiences of FYW courses
- **Identify local program aims** such as learning goals or outcome statements
- **Identify emergent aims** such as those of local teachers
- **Review local research** including colleagues across campus and in offices of institutional assessment
- **Name salient student formations** (e.g., course level, race, gender, language)

2. Analyze and Map Aims

- **Identify commonalities** between aims, within and across program participants
- **Map aims** to visually represent common expectations among program participants
- **Make informed hypotheses** about student expectations

3. Follow-up Survey of Students

- **Design survey questions** about students' expectations for writing courses and any salient student formations
- **Design a sampling strategy** which allows you to disaggregate by salient student formations
- **Analyze the structure of expectation factors** (e.g., Principal Component Analysis with Varimax rotation)
- **Retain items** with sufficiently high factor loadings
- **Minimize cross-loaded** survey items in factor interpretation

4. Compare Expectations

- **Compare student responses** in kind and magnitude
- **Calculate the degree** to which students express identified expectations
- **Average factor scores** across students and the number of items in each factor
- **Conduct an independent samples *t*-test** to compare the effect of salient student formations on expectations
- **Look for significant effects** at the $p < .05$ level

We recommend multiple rounds of SEAM research to identify additional expectations and account for changing student populations.

Figure 1. The Student Expectation Auditing and Mapping (SEAM) Method

SEAM: Institutional Context

We began researching students' expectations for FYW courses at MSU as part of IRB-approved research (protocols #x15-235e and #x16-1486e). The university is a predominantly white institution (PWI); white students consistently make up more than 50% of the student body (Brown & Dancy, 2010). At the time this study began, the universtiy enrolled 66.2% white students, 17.1% domestic students of color, and 15.1% international students (Michigan State University Office of the Registrar, 2015). International students came from a wide range of countries, with many students from China, South Korea, India, and Saudi Arabi (Michigan State University Office for International Students and Scholars, 2015).

The FYW program at MSU exists within a standalone writing department. During the academic year, the program serves more than 7,000 students, on average. Most students (85–90% of enrollments) enroll in a one-semester FYW course, while a smaller portion (10–15%) enroll in a two-semester sequence, which includes a BW course. Recently, the FYW program at MSU has been localizing elements of its operation. For example, the program has recently adopted a set of locally generated aims to serve as course learning outcomes, and streamlined its course offerings, to better convey these common aims.

While these recent efforts have produced new opportunities for assessment, we felt that these opportunities needed to better address students' perspectives on and reactions to their course experiences. The large number of students served by the program suggested a need for a mixed-methods approach, which would balance both qualitative and quantitative means for understanding students' expectations for FYW.

SEAM Phase 1: Audit the Aims of Key Program Participant Groups

The first phase of the SEAM method entails an audit of the aims of key participant groups (e.g., students, teachers, administrators, local colleagues). The purpose of the audit is to systematically document the goals that students, teachers, and administrators have for locally offered writing course. Because the aims identified during the audit furnishes the raw data for remaining phases of the SEAM research, it is important to elicit a wide range of perspectives. It also helps during this phase to identify important distinctions that may exist in student identities, so that these distinctions may be explicitly considered in later phases of SEAM research. For example, we anticipated possible differences in the expectations of students enrolled in BW courses and those in one-semester FYW courses. In our SEAM analysis, we were attentive at the outset to the possibility that

institutional remediation policies could contribute to different expectations between students in FYW and BW courses.

Our audit included educational aims from students enrolled in both FYW and BW courses. Additionally, we met with teachers of both courses, as well as past and present WPAs. We also consulted local research conducted by students and faculty outside of the FYW program. In total, these four key groups contributed a total of 50 separate aims for the FYW courses. Other SEAM researchers might find a greater or fewer number of local participant groups and aims.

Student-specified aims. In spring 2015, Matt conducted six interviews with three students, including two enrolled in BW courses, and one enrolled in a mainstream FYW class. While a larger group of students would have been ideal, conversations with these three students were sufficiently generative for scaffolding later phases of the SEAM process. During the interviews, students described course features they found most helpful, and what they had expected from their FYW courses. All three students specified some common activities as helpful:

- Giving and receiving peer feedback
- Learning and practicing academic citation styles and attribution
- Learning skills, knowledge, and rhetorical practices that would transfer beyond FYW, and into future academic, non-academic, and professional contexts

Students enrolled in BW courses expressed some additional expectations. These included:

- perceiving continual improvement, by learning methods for writing and building on prior knowledge and
- learning about culture, by engaging in conversations about culture and sharing writing with a diverse group of classmates.

Finally, the student enrolled in a mainstream FYW course also expressed an expectation for:

- opportunities to express work creatively and
- learning the writing conventions of specific disciplines.

The common aim of engaging in peer feedback echoed the FYW program's strong curricular commitment to peer review. However, students also articulated expectations that, at the time of this research, had not yet made their way into program outcome statements.

Administrators' FYW program aims. We also worked with administrators and teachers to document key writing program aims. Our discussion lead to a list of 16 aims, derived from the FYW outcome statement (see appendix A). Informing these aims is a programmatic definition of writing. The FYW program defines writing broadly, entailing alphabetic, non-alphabetic, and multimodal rhetorical practices, and holds that writing is best practiced with an attention to process and the cultural expectations of audience members. Additionally, students are asked to practice writing in the linked activities of inquiry, discovery, and communication. The program goals are operationalized in a common curriculum.

Teachers' aims. Teachers were also consulted during the audit. We wanted to include aims that had been emerging, especially among instructors who teach the BW course in the program. Program administrators and teachers had been actively discussing how to re-imagine this course. Matt participated in committee meetings and discussions with faculty to generate a list of possible expectations for students who were enrolled in the BW course. These aims were emerging to the extent that, while present in the program, they had not yet risen to the same level of codification as FYW program outcomes. Emerging pedagogical aims we identified included practicing evidence-based reasoning and attribution, as well as specific attention to students' multilingual and multimodal rhetorical assets (see appendix A).

Colleagues' local research. We also included findings from local research in our audit of aims. Local journalism undergraduates and faculty have produced a rich and textured account of effective pedagogy at the institution. These colleagues elicited students' opinions about effective pedagogy, inviting input through interviews and surveys, and worked with education researchers and professionals to interpret students' responses in terms of education discourse (Michigan State University School of Journalism, 2016). A major finding from their research was that students expected inclusive classroom experiences. For example, authors indicated that students appreciated when professors make active efforts to make their classrooms welcoming and comfortable for students in all stages of life—including transfer students, parents, or veterans—as well as students of all abilities, racial identities, religions, national origins, gender identities, and financial conditions. Therefore, in identifying the local aims surfaced by this text, we highlighted the authors' and contributors' focus on inclusive teaching.

SEAM Phase 2: Analyzing and Mapping Aims

The second phase is a preliminary analysis of the audited aims. Researchers should analyze aims by identifying commonalities between aims, both within and across key participant groups. Mapping helps visually represent both the commonalities and differences among key participant groups. Analyzing aims will allow researchers to produce grounded hypotheses about students' expectations. These hypotheses about expectations include general concepts that emerge from grouping similar aims. Analyzing audited aims and mapping hypothetical expectations is important, because it provides a theoretical underpinning for follow-up analysis in the third phase.

Our use of mapping is informed by what Adele Clarke (2005) has called situational analysis. Situational analysis and Clarke's situational maps can help researchers develop rich understandings and grounded theories of the situations and perspectives from which empirical data emerges (p. 72). Situational maps are not intended as "final analytic products" but rather aid researchers in "'opening up' the data and interrogating it in fresh ways within a grounded theory framework" (p. 83). SEAM maps borrow from Clarke's situational maps in several important ways: like situational maps, SEAM maps are intended primarily as a means of naming possible relationships among specific elements: program participants, aims, and expectations. Moreover, SEAM maps are intended as part of an interpretation process, rather than as final analyses of student expectations. The outcomes of phase 2 analyses and maps are hypothetical, working interpretations of data. Phase 3 will later offer the opportunity to verify, refine, and modify these constructs if necessary.

After auditing expectations from local participants and stakeholders, Matt and Wenjuan began to name shared expectations among these local participants. Figure 2 is a reduced version of our map and shows how we drew relationships between specific aims and our hypothesized expectations. We represented the four key participant groups (identified in phase 1) along the perimeter of a central zone, which we reserved for hypotheses about expectations. We plotted the aims of each participant group in separate quadrants along this perimeter. We made some hypotheses about expectations on the basis of theoretical connections participants made between individual aims. For example, the FYW program had previously articulated that, as part of the more general "Communication" learning goal, students should "learn and practice a communication process that involves evaluating rhetorical situations, making rhetorical decisions, and revising those decisions" and "learn to adapt or translate written ideas for different cultural locations and audiences." Additionally, we also included

hypotheses about expectations on the basis of inferences and connections we made between participants. For example, BW teachers specified the aim that students "practice attributing others' ideas in their writing and work" and all the students we talked to specified citation as an expectation. Therefore, we inferred there might be a more general expectation for attribution.

While we identified more than 50 separate aims through our audit, figure 2 highlights just 16 of the aims, and five possible expectation constructs that connect these aims together. The constructs we have highlighted include expectations specified by just one participant group (e.g., "continual growth" and "inclusive teaching"), as well as expectations that synthesize across participant groups (e.g., "peer feedback" and "attribution and citation").

SEAM Phase 3: Follow-Up with Students via Survey

In the third phase, researchers should follow up with students via survey about their expectations. Surveying students will help writing programs to verify, refine, and modify expectations identified in phase 2 and to evaluate the degree to which students adhere to identified expectations across a writing program. If phase 2 privileges the hermeneutic gaze of writing program researchers, phase 3 again elicits students' perspectives by asking them which of the identified aims they expect. The survey design and sampling strategy should allow researchers and WPAs to disaggregate according to relevant identity categories. By following up with students, SEAM researchers can evaluate expectations identified through the audit, and refine their understanding of the factors that comprise student expectations.

We administered a survey to FYW students enrolled in the program in fall 2016. The survey asked students which of the aims identified during the audit (phase 1) should be a part of FYW experiences. Students responded to these questions with a yes or no response. We then analyzed survey responses to determine the underlying structure of expectation factors.

The 125-question survey included 44 questions about students' expectations. The survey also included questions about students' demographics, their course experiences, the overall helpfulness of the course, and their prior test performances. Appendix A includes the student expectation questions included in our phase 3 follow-up survey.

Using a quota sampling strategy, we recruited students enrolled in all FYW courses to participate in the survey. Recruitment involved emailing professors and asking them to invite students to take the survey during a three-week period at the end of the semester.

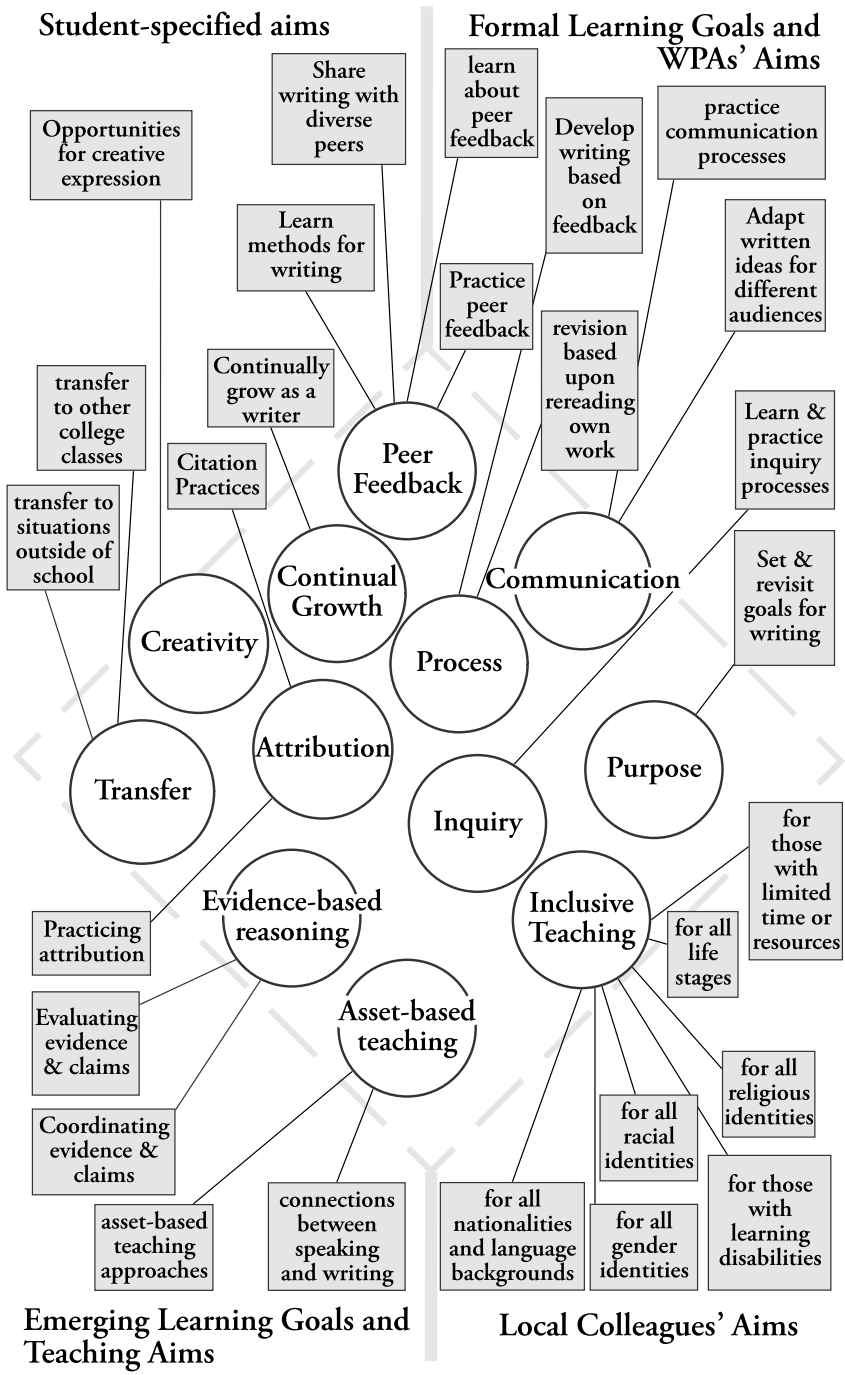

Figure 2. Example of Map from Phase 2: Preliminary Expectation Construct Analysis

Our sample included 518 total responses from students, including 389 responses from students enrolled in mainstream FYW courses and 129 from students enrolled in BW courses. Additionally, there was a sufficiently large sample of responses from students enrolled in mainstream FYW courses with a margin of error of 4.65% at the 95% confidence interval. A larger sample of BW students would have been preferable; the smaller number of students of BW relative to overall enrollments gave us a margin of error of 7.18% for these students.

We used principal component analysis (PCA) with varimax rotation to extract underlying factors of students' expectations. We retained survey items with sufficiently high factor loadings; Neely (2016) and DeVellis (2003) recommend retaining items with loadings of at least .40. Additionally, we minimized cross-loaded survey items, since these often make factor interpretation more difficult (Neely, 2016). Analysis of FYW students' survey responses revealed a four-factor solution, accounting for 53.28% of the variance in responses (see appendix B for the rotated component matrix with factor loadings). Our analysis indicated students had four types of expectations:

- **Core FYW Program Experiences.** Students expected the current FYW curriculum, which is defined by a focus on writing as a form of inquiry, discovery, and communication.
- **Continual Growth and Transferable Learning.** Students expected that FYW courses should provide the experience or perception of improvement or continual growth and should transfer beyond FYW.
- **Inclusive Teaching.** Echoing results from the Michigan State University School of Journalism (2016), students expected classroom environments and teaching practices that were inclusive for students of all identities.
- **Process-based writing methods.** Students also expected process-based methods of writing and revising, including peer feedback, and rereading (see appendix B for specific items associated with these factors).

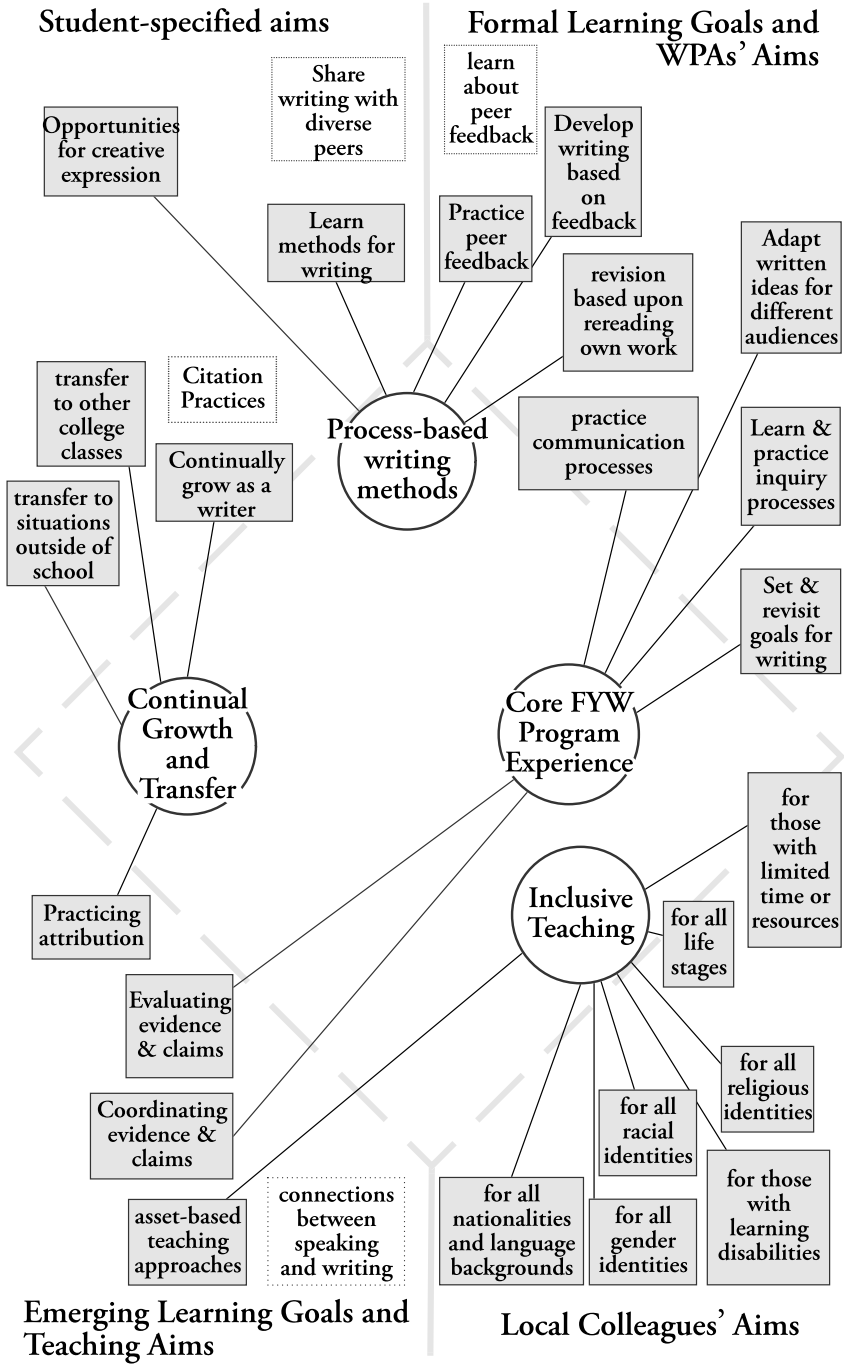

Figure 3. Follow-up Student Expectation Map

SEAM Phase 4: Comparison

In the fourth phase, researchers should compare identified student expectations, in kind and in magnitude, to better understand commonalities and differences between the expectations of different institutional participants. The outcome of this phase is a relational understanding of how student expectations compare to the aims of other local program participants. This phase, for example, might ask the extent to which students expect one class of experience more than another, or, if there are differences in the expectations of students enrolled in different courses.

We calculated the degrees to which students expressed each expectation we identified. Table 1 illustrates mean scores for each expectation and is broken down by course enrollment. The mean values were calculated by averaging factor scores across students and the number of items in each factor.

Table 1. Mean Scores Along Expectation Factors.

	N	Mean	Items
Core FYW Program Aims			8
Total	277	.903	
BW	48	.943	
FYW	229	.894	
Continual Growth and Transferable Learning			9
Total	274	.937	
BW	48	.947	
FYW	226	.936	
Inclusive Teaching			10
Total	289	.869	
BW	60	.902	
FYW	229	.860	
Process-based Methods for Writing and Revising			5
Total	320	.90	
BW	66	.90	
FYW	254	.90	

Additionally, we conducted an independent sample t-test to compare the effect of enrollment level on expectation factor scores in fall 2016. Results showed there was not a significant effect of enrollment level on any student expectations scores at the $p < .05$ level in fall 2016. There was not a sig-

nificant effect of enrollment level on students' expectations for FYW Program Aims [t(277) = 1.61, p = 0.112], Continual Growth and Transferable Learning [t(274) = 0.452, p = 0.653], Inclusive Teaching [t(289) = 1.312, p = 0.192], or Process-based Methods for Writing and Revising [t(320) = –0.024, p = 0.981].

Discussion

Survey results suggested students' expectations for the FYW program's aims were strong but outmatched by their expectation to grow and learn transferable skills, and to learn specific writing methods. This finding has practical value for the writing program, suggesting, for example, that teachers might be more explicit about articulating connections between existing curriculum and other rhetorical situations. Following our identification of student expectations, Matt added to his course assignments and activities designed to highlight opportunities for transferable learning. This finding also suggests convergences between local and disciplinary interests—students' expectations for transfer echoes calls in recent scholarship for more attention to teaching for transfer (Anson & Moore, 2016; Yancey, Robertson, & Taczak, 2014), as well as Eodice, Geller, and Lerner's (2016) finding that students find writing activities meaningful when they appear to facilitate transferable learning.

Based upon this finding, we advised the WPAs at Michigan State University to encourage teachers to pay attention to the ways in which students can experience a sense of growth and transferable learning. To that end, we encouraged instructors at to articulate connections between current program goals (FYW Program Aims) and the knowledge students are transferring in. Additionally, we encouraged instructors to imagine possibilities for transferring out the knowledge, practices, and dispositions currently cultivated in the FYW program. For example, teachers and administrators might ask:

- How does the writing construct as imagined invite students to build on prior experiences?
- How does the writing construct as imagined facilitate the acquisition of transferable skills and dispositions?
- Are there explicit outcomes MSU might add or revise to highlight the program's contribution to students' experience of continual growth and transferable learning?
- Are there moments in the curriculum where teachers can explicitly highlight possible contributions to continual growth and learning transferable learning?

We think asking these questions in professional development moments will help instructors make bridges between the formalized program goals and curriculum and the expectations we now know students had for transferable learning. Additionally, as a program identifying the answers to such questions helps integrate the expectations students have with the program's expectations, as reflected by the program goals.

Additionally, we identified some limitations in our enactment of the SEAM process. As mentioned previously, we believe the interviews we conducted in phase 1 with three students interviewed were incredibly generative, but that the process would have benefitted from speaking with more students.

Moreover, we would like to be able to identify with more confidence whether there were differences between BW and FYW student groups. We hypothesized differences in the expectations between students enrolled in FYW and BW courses; however, we found there were no significant differences between these two groups of students. Nevertheless, a larger sample of responses from students in BW courses would have been preferable for understanding with more confidence possible differences between these two groups of students. However, since the SEAM method encourages a recursive expansion and contraction of students' expectations, future audits may expand understandings about students' expectations beyond the four constructs identified in this article.

Additional research questions also emerged for the FYW program at Michigan State University. Having identified students' expectations, we might also ask: Did students actually have experiences that matched their expectations for FYW? How did students' expectations and their actual course experiences affect their overall perception of course helpfulness? We are also curious now what other possible associations may exist between students' characteristics, and their expectations.

Conclusion

In pursuit of local knowledge for the purposes of administering writing programs, there is a continued need to elicit contributions from students which will substantively inform writing program development and assessment. The SEAM method adds to the growing repertoire of methods WPAs and researchers can use to build locally meaningful writing programs and assessments. The SEAM method is designed for writing programs who are interested in meaningfully integrating student feedback into writing program development.

Additionally, using the SEAM method can raise important questions pertaining to professional development. At Michigan State University, for example, results from our enactment of SEAM have led to new questions about the relationship of formalized program goals and curricula to notions of transfer. To what extent does the FYW program, as currently conceived, provide opportunities for the transfer-in and transfer-out of knowledge, practices, and dispositions? Knowing that students value and expect these opportunities, we encouraged instructors to make overt efforts at articulating connections between program goals and curriculum, and the knowledges and writing situations students are likely to encounter at and near Michigan State University.

Among the ways in which SEAM has been generative, we have found the process points toward bridges between local and disciplinary conversations. Our investigation of students' expectations affirms that, like some recent writing research, students at MSU agreed that an attention to transfer across contexts should be a part of their courses, at some level. We see this as an entry point for learning more about specific ways the current inquiry-based curriculum might be reimagined, with a focus on the relationships between learners, contexts proximal to the FYW program. That this finding emerged through the process of using the SEAM method suggests to us that, rather than rigidly dichotomizing local and disciplinary knowledges, the process invites researchers and WPAs to understand local and disciplinary communities in relation to one another.

Nevertheless, we maintain that the best administration happens when administrators and researchers thoroughly understand and respect their local contexts, and insist that within writing programs, students must have a place in this discussion. As a formal process of undertaking local research, we hope the SEAM method contributes both to the assessments of WPAs who hope to know more about their students, and to facilitating conversations between WPAs in different contexts about their students' expectations. Our use of SEAM helped us identify the commonalities in students' expectations for writing courses; we are eager to learn if other institutions that use the SEAM method find similar results, and the extent to which these expectations are broadly generalizable for FYW students. Such conversations, at both local and disciplinary levels, will be critical for understanding how we might best serve our local audiences, our colleagues, and all members of our campus communities.

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Appendix A: SEAM Phase 3 Student Survey

Which of the following items do you expect from your FYW course? Students should . . .

1. . . . revise or reaffirm parts of their inquiries, including initial questions, methods of finding information, and interpretations.
2. . . . take a course that includes relevant content, and course documents that allowed them to understand the expectations for the course.
3. . . . learn how to make productive connections between speaking and writing.
4. . . . learn and practice a writing process that involves drafting, receiving feedback, and revising my writing.
5. . . . learn ideas and skills that will transfer to situations outside of school.
6. . . . practice or learn writing for a specific major or discipline.
7. . . . learn ideas and skills that will transfer in current or future workplaces.
8. . . . learn ideas and skills that will transfer to future writing courses.
9. . . . experience continual growth as writers through the duration of the course.
10. . . . develop and revise their writing or rhetorical decisions based upon their own growing knowledge.
11. . . . learn ideas and skills that will transfer to other college classes.
12. . . . practice attributing (giving credit to) others' ideas in their writing and work.
13. . . . learn their prior knowledge and language resources are assets for their writing.
14. . . . learn from a diverse group of peers.
15. . . . experience a course inclusive for students with learning disabilities.
16. . . . experience a course that includes reasonable policies for technology and uses of technology.
17. . . . make rhetorical decisions that are sensitive to the cultural expectations of diverse audiences.
18. . . . learn that different audiences have different cultural expectations.
19. . . . experience a course that gives all students opportunities to engage and participate.
20. . . . experience a course inclusive for students with limited time or resources.
21. . . . share writing and cultural experiences with diverse colleagues.

22. . . . have an instructor who demonstrates an appropriate respect for students and their boundaries.
23. . . . experience a course inclusive for students of all religious identities.
24. . . . experience a course inclusive for students of all racial identities.
25. . . . experience a course inclusive of students in all circumstances and life stages (for example transfer students, parents, veterans, commuters, or athletes).
26. . . . experience a course inclusive for students of all gender identities.
27. . . . experience a course inclusive for students of all nationalities and languages.
28. . . . learn methods for writing.
29. . . . have opportunities for them to express their work creatively.
30. . . . practice inquiry by posing, pursuing, and answering purposeful questions.
31. . . . give feedback on their peers' writing which is intended to help them revise writing.
32. . . . develop and revise their writing or rhetorical decisions based upon feedback from others.
33. . . . learn to situate their inquiries in respectful relationships with cultures and disciplinary communities.
34. . . . be an audience for their own writing; they should read their own writing and give themselves feedback for revising their work.
35. . . . engage with diverse perspectives and communities.
36. . . . practice coordinating evidence with claims.
37. . . . learn and practice an inquiry process that involves formulating questions, developing methods for finding information, interpreting information and reevaluating initial questions.
38. . . . learn and practice a communication process that involves evaluating rhetorical situations, making rhetorical decisions, and revising those decisions.
39. . . . learn specific rhetorical moves in academic writing (for example "hooks" or "transitions").
40. . . . set and revisit their goals for inquiries and communication.
41. . . . learn to adapt or translate written ideas for different cultural locations and audiences.
42. . . . practice identifying and evaluating claims.
43. . . . learn expectations for giving and receiving peer feedback on their writing.
44. . . . learn how to identify and evaluate claims.

Appendix B: Rotated Component Matrix for Student Expectations

Factor loadings > .40 are in boldface. Extraction method was Principal Component Analysis and rotation method was Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 7 iterations. Sources of expectations included students (STUDENT); administrators and teachers who contributed to MSU FYW program aims (FYW); administrators and teachers who contributed to emergent aims (EMERGE); and local campus research conducted by students and faculty in the MSU School of Journalism (LOCAL).

Students should . . .	Source	Continual Growth and Transfer	Inclusive Teaching	FYW Program Aims	Writing Methods
. . . practice attributing (giving credit to) others' ideas in their writing and work.	STUDENT	.81	.20	.20	.16
. . . learn ideas and skills that will transfer to other college classes.	STUDENT	**.78**	.15	.07	.26
. . . develop and revise their writing or rhetorical decisions based upon their own growing knowledge.	FYW	.77	.12	.15	.24
. . . experience continual growth as writers through the duration of the course.	STUDENT	**.70**	.11	.10	.19
. . . learn ideas and skills that will transfer to future writing courses.	STUDENT	**.58**	.05	.37	.11
. . . learn ideas and skills that will transfer in current or future workplaces.	STUDENT	**.56**	.23	.13	.14
. . . practice or learn writing for a specific major or discipline.	STUDENT	**.54**	.28	.27	–.04
. . . learn ideas and skills that will transfer to situations outside of school.	STUDENT	**.51**	.25	.24	.11
. . . learn and practice a writing process that involves drafting, receiving feedback, and revising my writing.	FYW	**.48**	.32	.18	.16
. . . experience a course inclusive for students of all nationalities and languages.	LOCAL	.09	**.86**	.14	.07
. . . experience a course inclusive for students of all gender identities.	LOCAL	.19	**.79**	.23	.21

Appendix B, continued.

Students should . . .	Source	Continual Growth and Transfer	Inclusive Teaching	FYW Program Aims	Writing Methods
. . . experience a course inclusive of students in all circumstances and life stages (for example transfer students, parents, veterans, commuters, or athletes).	LOCAL	.28	**.78**	.05	.12
. . . experience a course inclusive for students of all racial identities.	LOCAL	.08	.77	.24	.18
. . . experience a course inclusive for students of all religious identities.	LOCAL	.23	**.72**	.13	.13
. . . share writing and cultural experiences with diverse colleagues.	STUDENT	.10	**.59**	.39	.16
. . . experience a course inclusive for students with limited time or resources.	LOCAL	.30	**.58**	.13	.21
. . . experience a course that gives all students opportunities to engage and participate.	LOCAL	.33	**.55**	.21	.30
. . . learn that different audiences have different cultural expectations.	FYW	.34	**.54**	.36	.13
. . . experience a course that includes reasonable policies for technology and uses of technology.	LOCAL	.22	**.51**	.25	.18
. . . learn their prior knowledge and language resources are assets for their writing.	EMERG	.31	**.40**	.25	.09
. . . learn and practice an inquiry process that involves formulating questions, developing methods for finding information, interpreting information and reevaluating initial questions.	FYW	.26	.13	**.70**	.20

Appendix B, continued.

Students should . . .	Source	Continual Growth and Transfer	Inclusive Teaching	FYW Program Aims	Writing Methods
. . . practice identifying and evaluating claims.	EMERGE	.04	.31	**.66**	–.04
. . . learn how to identify and evaluate claims.	EMERGE	.31	.29	**.65**	.05
. . . learn expectations for giving and receiving peer feedback on their writing.	FYW	.16	.16	**.62**	.39
. . . set and revisit their goals for inquiries and communication.	FYW	.10	.26	**.58**	.28
. . . practice coordinating evidence with claims.	EMERGE	.09	.15	**.58**	.14
. . . learn to adapt or translate written ideas for different cultural locations and audiences.	FYW	.29	.24	**.52**	.15
. . . learn and practice a communication process that involves evaluating rhetorical situations, making rhetorical decisions, and revising those decisions.	FYW	.21	.00	**.52**	.26
. . . develop and revise their writing or rhetorical decisions based upon feedback from others.	FYW	.31	.04	.22	**.71**
. . . give feedback on their peers' writing which is intended to help them revise writing.	FYW	.21	.20	.17	**.67**
. . . have opportunities for them to express their work creatively.	FYW	.23	.13	.29	**.63**
. . . learn methods for writing.	STUDENT	.13	.10	.02	**.59**
. . . be an audience for their own writing; they should read their own writing and give themselves feedback for revising their work.	FYW	.36	.27	–.13	**.45**

Favorable Outcomes: How Outcomes Can Make Space for Multimodal Composition Curricula

Logan Bearden

While some composition programs have done the important work of integrating multimodality into their curricula, there still exists a disconnect between the scholarship of writing studies, which seems to suggest the presence and success of a multimodal turn, and the day-to-day work of individual programs, which still focus overwhelmingly on alphabetic writing. In this article, I perform and detail an analysis of a collection of twenty-five outcomes statements to determine what those programs value at the curricular level. Outcomes yield rich insights in this regard because of the ways in which they outline definitions of and orientations to the work of composition. This analysis suggests that certain outcomes allow for a multimodal composition curriculum while others leave little space for such content. With this information, writing program administrators who want to include multimodality at the programmatic level can use outcomes to (re)examine their values, to initiate conversations about the possibility of aligning those values with disciplinary research, and to take the first steps in that process.

Introduction

Scholarship on multimodality emphasizes the need not just for a multimodal focus in individual classrooms but an integration of multimodality into curricula at the programmatic level (Cope and Kalantzis; Kress, "Gains and Losses"; Lee and Khadka; Selfe; Shipka). In examining this scholarship alone, which so often demonstrates multimodal pedagogies at work, we might assume the existence of a multimodal turn in composition (Mueller; Schiavone), or what Jason Palmeri terms "multimodal curricular transformation" (149). However, empirical research suggests we have yet to accomplish this. In 2006, for example, Anderson et al. presented data collected in a national survey that suggest: (1) although most respondents

articulated a robust theory of multimodality, most of the assignments given to students focused on the visual-as-multimodality, proving the prevalence of a limited multimodal curriculum; (2) 84% replied that teaching multimodality took place at the grassroots level instead of the programmatic; and (3) only 24% of the responses indicated that multimodality was an integral part of the composition program's overall curriculum (69). Similarly, after an examination of multimodal assignments in various textbooks, Aubrey Schiavone contends our "theories posit the importance of teaching students to produce visual and multimodal compositions, while the practices encapsulated in textbook prompts tend to promote *the consumption* of multimodal compositions more so than their production" (359, emphasis added). While the data Anderson et al. offer are now over a decade out of date, Schiavone reveals that there is still much work to be done.

Throughout this article, I will define multimodal composing as the making and sharing of meaning with multiple semiotic resources (Kress, *Multimodality*). It is not just visual nor just digital. It includes a materially expansive repertoire of meaning-making potentialities. With this definition, we can see that composition as a literate practice is and always has been multimodal (Faigley), even if our composition programs have not treated it as such.[1] We have attempted to do better about this. The CWPA's *WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition* (*WPA OS*), which "attempts to both represent and regularize writing programs' priorities for first-year composition" by articulating "what composition teachers nationwide have learned from practice, research, and theory" (*WPA Outcomes* 144), has been twice revised to do just that: first in 2008 to include digital technology initiatives and again in 2014 to include multimodal literacies (Dryer et al.). Additionally, as I mentioned above, our scholarship provides models of what such curricula and programs would look like (Graban, Charlton, and Charlton; Kress, *Multimodality*; Sheridan, Ridolfo, and Michel; Sheridan and Rowsell; Shipka; Sheppard). Collectively, these models present a curriculum that is radically different from the first two versions of the *WPA OS*, which "focused unapologetically on traditional academic writing and relegated digital technology to a brief addendum" (Leverenz 34). They present a new version of and vision for composition curricula.

Nevertheless, the disconnect between the scholarship of the discipline reflected in the most current iteration of the *WPA OS* (and in the conversations outlined above) and the reality of composition curricula persists. There are several possible reasons for this. First, too often we conflate multimodal with digital (Alexander and Rhodes; Baldwin), which can cause resistance from administrators and instructional staff who feel they lack expertise with the digital. Second, if multimodality is a grassroots endeavor,

those instructors who do choose to take it up eventually graduate, retire, accept a different position, or otherwise move on taking their pedagogies with them. And third, we often treat multimodality as ancillary, relegating it to the end of the semester, making it worth a small percentage of a student's final grades when we and our students are already overburdened. In so doing, we reinforce the privileged position of print (Whithaus). WPAs who want to create truly multimodal curricula must confront and work against these issues and initiate (difficult) conversations that will move us in the direction of multimodal curricular transformation.

I contend that outcomes statements can be a possible first step in that process. Outcomes statements articulate a programmatic orientation to and curricular definition of "composition" (Burnham; Ewell; Yancey). They delineate curricular values and cohere programs around those values. In this article, I perform and detail an analysis of a collection of outcomes statements with the goal of examining those programmatic values at the time of data collection. This analysis reveals three findings: (1) there is a positive correlation between the presence of outcomes that focus on multimodal composing and outcomes that focus on rhetoric; (2) programs whose outcome statements define composition as the rhetorical construction of texts can and do invite multimodal composing while programs whose outcome statements define composition as alphabetic writing leave less space for such content; and (3) there is little consensus in the version of multimodality delivered to students in our composition curricula. These findings reveal a correlation between the values reflected in outcomes statements and the presence or absence of certain kinds of curricular content (like multimodality). This is not to say that outcomes statements can be the sole source of transformation for programs—one document alone cannot do that. However, curricular transformation does take place via documents where disciplinary knowledge and local practices intersect. According to Tarez Samra Graban and Kathleen J. Ryan, "the (re)production of curricular documents provides a space for initiating and sustaining high-stakes topics such as curriculum . . . and it also promotes reform by reconstructing programs they represent" (89–90). Outcomes, rather than being the solution or sole means by which multimodal curricular transformation is achieved, can (re)start conversations about programmatic values. This article both examines what a selection of outcomes suggests our programs currently value and then discusses specific kinds of outcomes that can initiate the arduous process of multimodal curricular transformation. In the following section, I detail my methods of data collection and the coding scheme I utilized to analyze the statements before moving into my analysis. After that, I present the analysis of this coding, which demonstrates the positive correlation

between rhetoric and multimodality and the negative correlation between outcomes focused on alphabetic writing and multimodality. Then, I examine in detail how outcomes coded as related to multimodality offer various definitions of that concept, outlining which of those most accurately reflects the scholarship outlined above. I end with practical considerations for WPAs who are interested in initiating multimodal curricular transformation at their own institutions.

Coding

Here, I will discuss the methods by which I first collected and then coded the twenty-five outcomes statements comprising the data set I discuss in this article. This data set comes from a larger, mixed-methods study concerning the integration of multimodality into composition curricula at the programmatic level. One of the study's methods was a survey that asked respondents (WPAs) the following:

- demographic information about their programs;
- if the program had outcomes, and if so, to attach them to the survey;
- about the relationship of those local outcomes to the *WPA OS*;
- if their program had undergone curricular revision in recent history; and
- whether the program included multimodal composing as a part of its content.

The survey was distributed in two ways: on a relevant professional listserv, the WPA-L, and selective invitation. Selective invitations were determined: (1) if the program had a program website and (2) if the program had clearly articulated outcomes. I determined this by searching each program's website and for the following terms: *learning outcomes*, *outcomes*, *mission statement*, and *program goals*. Using these criteria, I located a total of forty possible programs. I invited the directors of those programs to participate in the survey via an email that included a brief description of the project and a link to the survey.

The survey received forty-eight responses. In response to question one, which asked about the kind of institution at which the respondent worked, 91% (41) reported that they worked at a four-year institution and the others reported working at a community college. The analysis that I present in this article is admittedly skewed toward four-year institutions. The sample size is small, and it's quite a convenient and self-selective sample—the data and the analysis cannot be generalizable. What I am attempting to outline here is not generalizable, but it is illuminating: a snapshot in time of

twenty-five programs and what those programs claimed to value. Those values, even in such a small sample size, yield interesting insights, as I will demonstrate below.

Question 6 of the survey asked respondents whether their program had an outcomes statement, and if so, to attach that statement to the survey. Twenty-eight programs attached qualitative data in the box available for the statements. Three of those twenty-eight wrote in to say that they used the *WPA OS* verbatim without actually attaching those statements. I did not include those three statements/programs in the corpus coded for the purposes of this article because I was more interested in how local programs were defining composition and how those local statements compared to the national, regularized composition values outlined in the *WPA OS*. Additionally, the survey revealed that those remaining 25 were indeed informed or influenced by the *WPA OS*. Thirty-seven program directors responded to question 11, which inquired about the relationship between the *WPA OS* and the respondent's program's outcomes. Seventeen (46%) reported that their programs utilized the *WPA OS* as a flexible guideline in the creation of their own contextually-specific outcomes. Seven answered that they have completely adopted the WPA outcomes as their own. Only three of the respondents answered that they did not utilize the *WPA OS* at all in the creation of their program's outcomes. Thus, either as inventional material for local outcomes or providing the statement itself for those local programs, the *WPA OS* has definitely influenced the outcomes coded for this project.

To analyze the 442 outcomes collected from the 25 statements, I utilized a deductive coding scheme developed from categories outlined in different iterations of the *WPA OS*. I did so because the *WPA OS* offers definitional categories for different kinds of outcomes, which are useful for examining programmatic values manifested in those statements. The first version of the *WPA OS* introduced four categories considered foundational to composition: rhetorical knowledge; knowledge of conventions; critical thinking, reading, and writing; and processes. In my coding scheme, I retained the titles of three categories of outcomes from *WPA OS* 3.0: rhetorical knowledge, knowledge of conventions, and processes. However, for the purposes of this project, I kept critical thinking, reading, and writing from *WPA OS* 1.0 rather than critical thinking, reading, and composing from *WPA OS* 3.0 (see figure 1). I did so, as I will reference below, because while *WPA OS* 3.0 makes multimodality an integrated part of each category (as evidenced by the use of *composing* rather than *writing*), I wanted to highlight the presence/absence of multimodality with this coding. Keeping the title of this category as critical thinking, reading, and writing allowed me to do so. Following the *WPA OS*, the coding scheme defined rhetorical

knowledge as the ability to respond to different audiences, situations, and contexts. Thus, within this category, I included concepts such as rhetorical situation, rhetorical awareness, rhetorical terms (such as the rhetorical appeals), and appropriate voice, tone, and level of formality. I note here that these outcomes within rhetorical knowledge do not prescribe the materials with which students work, which means these kinds of outcomes do not require students to work within print, unlike other categories within this coding scheme. Critical thinking, reading, and writing describes the kinds of analytical thinking and doing emphasized in certain composition courses, including locating and evaluating sources, reading/analyzing texts, reading for patterns across texts, conducting inquiry/research, synthesizing sources, examining the relationships among language, knowledge, and power, and writing to learn. I defined processes as both the act of engaging in the composing process (drafting, collaboration, revision, etc.) and acts of self-reflection or metacognition. Evidence of a process-based outcome consisted of terms like reflection, collaboration, drafting, and feedback. Knowledge of conventions included structural conventions and issues of formatting. Common terms included here were correctness, documentation/citation, academic discourse, and the common format of texts within disciplines. I should note here that processes and conventions both require students to work with alphabetic writing and critical thinking, reading, and writing, while emphasizing interpretation/analysis, tends to prescribe alphabetic writing as the vehicle for that thinking. In short, and as I will demonstrate later, these leave little space for multimodality because they prescribe the kinds of composing that students do.

Rhetorical Knowledge

- Learning and engaging rhetorical concepts
- Negotiating purposes, audiences, contexts
- Responding to a variety of rhetorical situations and contexts calling for purposeful shifts in voice, tone, and level of formality
- Composing and reading in several genres
- Understanding how genres shape reading and writing

Processes

- Drafting, editing, and revision
- Giving and receiving feedback
- Collaborating/the social aspects of composing
- Reflection and metacognition

Knowledge of Conventions

- Grammar, structure/organization, tone, mechanics
- Common formats of texts
- Citation, fair use, documentation

Multimodality

- Digital literacy/technological literacy
- Understanding and using a variety of technologies for different purposes
- Matching the capacities of different environments
- Using multiple modes/using modes beyond the written word

Critical Thinking and Writing

- Analyzing, synthesizing, interpreting and evaluating ideas, information, and texts
- Separating assertions from evidence
- Evaluating sources/reading across texts for patterns
- Composing for inquiry/writing to learn
- Locating and evaluating sources
- Analyzing texts using different theoretical lenses

Figure 1. Deductive coding scheme for outcomes statements.

In addition to these four, I created a fifth category for the coding scheme: multimodality. In a detailed description of the drafting of the third iteration of the *WPA OS*, Dryer et al. reference the two modifications to the *WPA OS*: one in 2008 to add a category for composing in electronic environments and another in 2013 (with *WPA OS* 3.0) that did away with that discrete category and made multimodal composition (not just digital) an

integral part of all categories. There are limitations and affordances to both iterations. The 2008 addition of composing in electronic environments was an attempt to emphasize the role that media play in the composing process. However, it focused only on digital media and treated the digital only as a vehicle through which alphabetic text could be realized (Callaway; Selfe and Ericsson). *WPA OS* 3.0 expanded the definition of composition from alphabetic writing to multimodal composition, stating "'composing' refers broadly to complex writing processes that are increasingly reliant on the use of digital technologies. Writers also attend to elements of design, incorporating images and graphical elements into texts intended for screens as well as printed pages" (*WPA Outcomes Statement*). Such a definition is definitely beneficial for theorizing composing processes, but not the best for the purposes of this coding. I chose to keep multimodality as a discrete category not because I believe multimodality to be absent from the current iteration of the *WPA OS* and certainly not because I believe it should be its own category again, but merely to highlight the presence/absence of multimodality within the statements collected from individual programs. This kind of coding inevitably leads to oversimplified definitions and understandings. The skills highlighted and included in these different categories reciprocally and symbiotically influence the composing process. As such, one cannot be truly isolated from another. I created these categories merely to unpack the values of programs according to their outcomes statements. Though I treat these categories discretely throughout the rest of this article, they are always interconnected.

Additionally, I must acknowledge that I have imposed a coding scheme onto a set of data, which is a drawback to this kind of analysis. Had I taken a grounded approach and coded these outcomes inductively (Chiovitti and Piran; Lingard, Albert, and Levinson), different categories might have emerged, ones that might paint a very different picture of the programmatic values within this data set. For instance, I might have coded for student identity solicited by outcome: student as researcher, student as writer, student as composer, etc.; or, I might have coded for consumption/analysis and production; the category of critical thinking, reading, and writing might have been broken down further into the analysis of literature, issues of social justice/equity, synthesizing secondary sources, etc. While such analysis is beyond the scope of this article, examining what categories emerge from outcomes themselves might be an avenue for future research, especially as we develop our understanding of the ways in which curricular documents make space for or constrain certain kinds of content.

In the following section, I present the analysis of this coding, which I have organized according to the final question of the survey, a question

that asked respondents how they perceived a multimodal composition curriculum would affect their programs. Respondents could select the following answers: including multimodality would constitute a minor revision to the program; multimodality would constitute a substantial revision (i.e., a transformation) to the curriculum of the program; or the program already included multimodality within its outcomes. Arranging the data in this way reveals the positive correlation between outcomes coded as rhetoric and outcomes coded as multimodality, thus presenting a continuum of programs from those that define composition as alphabetic writing only to those that define composition as a rhetorically informed process of making and sharing meaning without prescribing the medium in which those processes are realized. Such a continuum, I argue, reveals that the latter more than the former creates space for multimodal composition in composition curricula. For those of us who work in writing programs, these capacious outcomes might be a starting point for initiating multimodal curricular transformation.

Analysis

The frequencies in the overall corpus (outlined in table 1) reveal an orientation to composition that overwhelmingly values alphabetic writing. This is evidenced by the popularity of outcomes coded as critical thinking, reading, and writing and knowledge of conventions, which prescribe alphabetic writing as the medium through which students demonstrate learning.

Table 1. Survey Totals[2]

Outcome	Number of Outcomes	Average per Statement
Rhetorical Knowledge	87	3.5
Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing	134	5.4
Processes	99	3.9
Knowledge of Conventions	97	3.8
Multimodality	25	1.0

Here are two examples from these categories:

- **Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing.** Analyze and critique sources in their writing (respondent 22)
- **Knowledge of Conventions.** Produce written work that displays adherence to the conventions of academic writing, including control

> of grammar, spelling, word usage, syntax, and punctuation (respondent 47)

These prescriptive outcomes accounted for just over half of the total corpus, and from these examples, it should be clear that across statements and the following clusters, the definition of composition constructed by programmatic outcomes and delivered to students is still closely connected to the logic of alphabetic writing and textual epistemologies. One cause of this environment could be the value placed on "close reading," which N. Katherine Hayles argues has enjoyed "a preeminent role as the essence of disciplinary identity" (58). The critical consumption and production of print/alphabetic texts is connected with the long history of English studies from which rhetoric and composition emerged, a history, these outcomes reveal, from which composition has difficulty distancing itself. Such an orientation leaves little room for multimodality, which is necessarily capacious, in the curriculum. Indeed, as I will explore below, there is a negative correlation between multimodal outcomes and those coded as knowledge of conventions and critical thinking, reading, and writing in particular. However, the data also display a positive correlation between the presence of outcomes coded as multimodality and those coded as rhetorical knowledge. I contend that this is because rhetorical knowledge does not prescribe the media through which students achieve and demonstrate learning. Indeed, focusing on the capaciousness of rhetoric rather than an alphabetic writing constitutes a different *orientation to* and a *definition of* composition, one that is located in outcomes statements. In the following paragraphs, I will explore these positive and negative correlations among differently coded outcomes in greater detail.

Multimodality as Minor Revision

Seven programs placed themselves in the category of multimodality as minor revision, yielding 164 outcomes. As table 2 illustrates, these statements predominately emphasized critical thinking, reading, and writing: it averaged a higher frequency in this category than in the overall total. Interestingly and correspondingly, multimodality averaged a lower frequency in this category than in the overall corpus totals. This demonstrates negative correlation between that category and multimodality. The majority of outcomes contained under critical thinking, reading, and writing focus on the consumption of and interaction with alphabetic texts—they require students to work with writing and writing only. To illustrate, the following are some examples of those outcomes:

- Develop strategies to understand scholarly source*s* (respondent 6).
- Students will develop their understanding of writing's relationship to academic inquiry (respondent 16).
- Increase abilities to closely and critically read a variety of nonfiction texts, including (but not limited to) argumentative texts, their own writing, and their peers' writing in order to identify rhetorical strategies that they can apply to their writing abilities to create texts that respond to varied rhetorical situations in a range of written genres, to include (but not limited to) US academic argument and research-supported texts (respondent 27).

Table 2. Multimodality as Minor Revision

Outcome	Number of Outcomes	Average per Statement
Rhetorical Knowledge	28	4.0
Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing	56	8.0
Processes	42	6.0
Knowledge of Conventions	33	4.7
Multimodality	5	0.7

Though these are just a few of the fifty-six outcomes categorized as critical thinking, reading, and writing outcomes, they reveal a trend: these kinds of outcomes require that students use alphabetic writing: to learn, to analyze, to synthesize, to research. While the skills that they cultivate differ, the constant is alphabetic, academic writing. There are two issues here. First, these outcomes prescribe the media in which/with which students work. A multimodal composition curriculum, as it has been conceived in our scholarship, only requires that students with multiple modes to achieve their purposes. Indeed, the goal of such a curriculum has been called "rhetorical dexterity," or the ability to cross modes, media, purposes, audiences, and contexts using rhetorical knowledge (Graban, Charlton, and Charlton). Prescribing these choices for students runs counter to this objective. Second, the negative correlation between these critical thinking, reading, and writing and multimodal outcomes suggests that this prescription is what causes there to be little room for multimodality in the curricula of programs dominated by these outcomes. When we prescribe the alphabetic, we preclude the multimodal. In the following subsection, I will explore in greater detail outcomes related to knowledge of conventions and how those too prescribe materials for students and leave little space for multimodality.

Multimodality as Substantial Revision

Another seven programs placed themselves in the category of multimodality as substantial revision. Table 3 shows that although the specific frequencies are different, this cluster follows a similar pattern to the previous.

Table 3. Multimodality as Substantial Revision

Outcome	Number of Outcomes	Average per Statement
Rhetorical Knowledge	25	3.5
Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing	35	5.0
Processes	26	3.7
Knowledge of Conventions	34	4.8
Multimodality	3	0.4

Multimodality occurs infrequently, and the most popular category is critical thinking, reading, and writing. However, these programs are also more focused on knowledge of conventions, and multimodality averages an even lower frequency than the previous category. I argue that this is because knowledge of conventions focuses on generating "correct" alphabetic writing which leaves even less space for a multimodal composition curriculum. For example, here is a selection of some of the outcomes I categorized as pertaining to knowledge of conventions in this data cluster:

- Write an essay that is unified around a main claim, proceeds in a logical way, and consists of cohesive paragraphs that separate and connect ideas effectively (respondent 47).
- Produce written work that displays adherence to the conventions of academic writing, including control of grammar, spelling, word usage, syntax, and punctuation; appropriate tone, style, diction, and register (respondent 47).
- Copy-edit at every level (sentence, paragraph, essay) by considering conventional usage alongside your purpose (respondent 28).
- Present sentence structure, tone, voice, and vocabulary appropriate for academic writing (sentence structure/syntax; word choice/vocabulary) (respondent 17).

From these outcomes and the thirty-one others like them, it is clear that the emphasis on conventions is an emphasis on a particular kind of alphabetic writing. Outcomes like this are prescriptive: they prescribe that students

write essays; they prescribe academic writing; they prescribe linear logics. To be sure, such things are important for learning academic, alphabetic writing. That is, however, only one way of learning, one way of making and sharing meaning. Thus, these outcomes leave little space for multimodal composition, which does not prescribe the media, materials, and technologies with which students learn.

Multimodality Already Included

Respondents that claimed their programs already included multimodality included more outcomes coded as rhetorical knowledge than in the previous two data clusters. In other words, there is a positive correlation between the presence of outcomes coded as multimodality and outcomes coded as rhetorical knowledge.

Table 4. Multimodality Already Included

Outcome	Number of Outcomes	Average per Statement
Rhetorical Knowledge	30	3.3
Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing	38	4.2
Processes	27	3.0
Knowledge of Conventions	25	2.8
Multimodality	15	1.6

These programs give much more attention to rhetoric, extending the available means with which students can make and share meaning and knowledge, and thereby making space for multimodality. There were fifteen multimodal outcomes. Some of those outcomes include:

- Adapt their [i.e., students'] writing for multiple genres, styles, and technologies in ways that reflect different rhetorical situations (respondent 25).
- Employ multiple modes of representation rhetorically in their own composing (respondent 22).
- Understand the possibilities of digital media/technologies for composing and publishing texts (respondent 22).
- Use this knowledge to design texts appropriate to the rhetorical situation and genre choice (respondent 18).

These multimodal outcomes emerge out of these program's attention and commitment to rhetoric. In these outcomes, students must be able to

understand the varying rhetorical potentials of different tools, technologies, media, and environments. By using that understanding, students are able to demonstrate an effective rhetorical performance. In this brief selection, we see the interplay of rhetoric and multimodality, and we see an interplay between knowledge and performance. To me, this suggests that rhetorical knowledge, more than just being positively correlated with multimodality in this data set, invites and perhaps requires multimodality in a way that other outcomes do not.

The remaining four categories of outcomes in this data cluster also reveal that the definition of and orientation to the work of composition at these programs is different. Rhetorical knowledge appeared 30 times in this cluster, making it the second most frequent, unlike in the previous two clusters and the overall corpus totals. The most frequent kind of outcome within these statements is still critical thinking, reading, and writing, which appeared thirty-nine times. As I described earlier, these outcomes mostly include using alphabetic writing to learn, reading academic sources critically, and synthesizing academic research. They are outcomes that prescribe the mode in which students work, outcomes that move students inevitably in the direction of alphabetic writing. Additionally, in this cluster, knowledge of conventions only appears twenty-five times. This is particularly significant, because this places it behind both processes (27) and rhetorical knowledge (30)—the only cluster in which this occurs. To compare, for those programs who indicated that multimodality would constitute a substantial transformation to the curriculum, there were an average of 4.8 outcomes connected to knowledge of conventions per statement placing it just behind critical thinking, which averaged 5.0 outcomes per statement (see table 3). These frequencies reveal differing definitions composition: in the substantial revision category, composition means writing and writing only; in the other (multimodality as already included), composition means a rhetorically informed process of making and sharing meaning. The two are not the same.

The frequencies in tables 2–4 yield insights for WPAs who want to incorporate multimodal composition in their programs. These data are clear: overall multimodality is still peripheral to the outcomes, the values, and the curricula of writing programs. I argue that it continues to be peripheral because most of these outcomes require that students work with alphabetic writing rather than with rhetorical concepts and practices that do not prescribe the materials with which students create. Multimodality occurred/occurs considerably less frequently in programs that emphasized critical thinking, reading, and writing and knowledge of conventions. In the minor revision cluster, for example, critical thinking, reading, and

writing outcomes appeared twice as frequently as rhetorical knowledge and over eleven times more frequently than multimodality (see tables 2 and 3). In contrast, rhetorical knowledge is less prescriptive. It invites students not only to understand the different rhetorical capacities of different media, technologies, and contexts but also to perform within those. The outcomes for this particular domain ask students to "focus on a purpose" or to "respond to the needs of different audiences"; they do not prescribe who that audience or what that purpose should be. This is fundamentally at odds with a category like knowledge of conventions (again, as it has been defined here), which is tied to a specific set of materials. In programs where multimodality is already included, rhetorical knowledge is second only to critical thinking, reading, and writing. Rhetoric, these data reveal, makes space for multimodality, because it is an altogether different understanding of composition, one that is not predicated on alphabetic text.[3] If we are to include multimodality as a part of composition curricula, then outcomes with a capacious understanding of rhetoric might be one in a series of considerations within that process, a starting point in the conversation. In the following section, I turn to the twenty-five outcomes from this corpus coded as multimodality, examining what kinds of outcomes value multimodality and outlining the different versions of multimodal curricula at work in these statements.

Multimodal Outcomes

Not all multimodal outcomes accomplish the same goals. According to the data I discuss in this section, there is little consistency in the definition of multimodality delivered to students. In these outcomes, there are four versions of multimodal composition curricula:

1. an undertheorized version that adds modes on top of or alongside writing;
2. a version of multimodality defined as utilizing digital tools without considering the limitations and affordances of those tools;
3. a kind of multimodality that is conflated with the visual; and
4. multimodality as an extension and outgrowth of rhetoric, the most robust understanding.

The curriculum associated with the latter allows students to make rhetorical choices without prescribing the materials with which students can compose. I argue these outcomes make space for a multimodal curriculum informed by the scholarship that I reviewed at the beginning of this article.

First, some multimodal outcomes only work to reinforce the privileged position of alphabetic writing within the academy—these undertheorize multimodal composing as the simple addition of extra modes. For example, one of the respondents' outcomes could technically be coded as multimodal because it included oral communication, which is a mode beyond alphabetic writing. However, this outcome and this program elide the importance of rhetoric in multimodal composing. The outcome reads: "learn oral communication skills for effective participation in discussions as well as for formal presentations" (respondent 34). Oral/aural communication here is not treated as something that needs to be theorized with rhetoric, but as a mere vehicle of communication. Such an outcome prepares students to contribute to in-class discussion and to make formal presentations but does not contribute to their knowledge as rhetoricians. Different modes have different limitations and affordances, different rhetorical possibilities (Jewitt; Kress, "Gains and Losses"). Simply adding an additional mode to writing is not sufficient to convey that knowledge to students.

The second way in which these outcomes statements define multimodality is as technological or digital literacy, but in that literacy, students merely *use* digital tools. The second iteration of the *WPA OS* did something similar to this—emphasizing the importance of digital technologies but only in relationship to the process(es) of alphabetic writing (Callaway). In this approach to multimodal composing, the ability to compose with digital technologies is constructed as a skill that students learn instead of a rhetorical choice informed by a knowledge of the limitations and affordances of those tools. For example, respondent 30's outcome states that students will "use computer technology throughout the research writing process." Use is the operative term here. In this version of multimodality, students do not consider the different rhetorical affordances of the technology, but merely utilize that technology to compose print texts. The use of the technology here does not inform or contextualize the process of composing. Students use these tools for research or to communicate, but not to consider the ways in which technologies have rhetorical impacts. Digital literacy is important, perhaps vital, in the current moment, but that literacy must be informed by rhetoric if it is to deliver to students what we know and believe about multimodality (see Selber, for example).

The third way in which these outcomes statements define multimodality is at the intersection of the visual and the verbal, meaning that students critically and rhetorically combine these two modes in the process of making and sharing meaning. In so doing, these outcomes prescribe the kinds of texts that students compose, constraining their rhetorical possibilities, much like outcomes related to knowledge of conventions. While these out-

comes do have students working at the intersection of multiple modes, it is still not the robust rhetorical understanding for which multimodal theory has advocated. The outcomes at respondent 13's program follow this definition. Those outcomes read that students will be able to "demonstrate an understanding of the basic elements of visual rhetoric" and "be able to read and critique visual designs and formats." At the beginning of this article, I cited the Anderson et al. survey from 2006, which reported that "multimodal composition curriculum" most often means "visual rhetoric." These outcomes do the same thing. Additionally, this particular definition and these particular outcomes always subsume the visual to the alphabetic. To illustrate, respondent 13's other two outcomes that pertain to multimodality state that students should "know how to use commonplace software to create visuals that effectively make or support arguments," and "distinguish between information that is best communicated in visual format and information best communicated in text and make transitions and connections between visual and textual arguments." Both of these outcomes assume that the arguments precede the visuals, as if rhetorical invention were not possible in those spaces. This is quite a limited approach to multimodality. Jody Shipka argues that allowing students to make their own choices about the modes, media, and genres in which they compose assists them in becoming better problem-solvers, critical thinkers, and therefore composers. By prescribing the modes in which students can compose, these outcomes prevent them from developing the thinking and composing valued by a multimodal composition curriculum.

A fourth category of multimodal outcomes does offer a more robustly theorized understanding of multimodality. These outcomes define multimodality as the manifestation of rhetorical knowledge and performance. For example, these have students "understand the differences in the rhetorical strategies afforded by both print and electronic composing processes and texts" (respondent 43), in which students know that there are different logics, affordances, and limitations associated with different media, and "employ multiple modes of representation rhetorically in their own composing" (respondent 22), in which students are expected to put that understanding into practice. Such outcomes make the implicit argument that multimodality is an extension of rhetoric engaging both a knowledge of how multiple modes work and a practice of utilizing them. At respondent 1's program, the relationship between knowledge and performance is articulated in one outcome, which reads, "you will have composed using digital technologies, gaining awareness of the possibilities and constraints of electronic environments." Through the process of using digital composing technologies, students will expand their rhetorical knowledge. The

program includes another outcome that echoes this as well: "you will have adapted your writing to distinct rhetorical contexts drawing attention to the way composition transforms *across contexts and forms*" (emphasis added). Knowledge and performance, theory and practice, intersect in these outcomes. Thus, they embody the nuances of multimodal theory and the version of composition that scholarship argues should be the content and focus of our programs. Additionally, as I illustrated in the previous section, rhetoric- and multimodality-focused outcomes do not prescribe the kinds of texts students create or the modes with which they compose. In respondent 25's outcomes statement, the multimodal outcome reads that students will be able to "adapt their writing for multiple genres, styles, and technologies in ways that reflect different rhetorical situations." Others like this ask students to consider "design and/or medium in accordance with the rhetorical situation" (respondent 42), and "use a variety of digital and multimedia sources critically" (respondent 5). These outcomes invite students to develop rhetorical knowledge that they then enact in their composing processes without prescribing the materials with which they compose. Thus, these outcomes allow students to develop more rhetorically informed practices, allowing them to become more flexible, adroit composers in all contexts.

These four different ways of conceiving of multimodality—as the mere inclusion of another mode of communication, as technological/digital literacy, as prescribed visual-verbal rhetoric, or as a (rhetorical) knowledge of and (rhetorical) performance within multiple modes—paint a portrait of where these composition programs are in terms of multimodality. These outcomes do the best work when they draw on principles of rhetoric and define the work of composition as making and sharing meaning with any and all available materials. Those who direct or work with/in writing programs will find this information both illuminating and useful.

Looking Ahead

I noted at the beginning of this article that there remains a disconnect between what scholarship says our composition programs should do and the reality of what actually takes place in those programs. I have attempted to outline how outcomes might assist in remedying this disconnect by examining values manifested by outcomes and how those values can affect the implementation of multimodal composition curricula. Outcomes, of course, cannot achieve multimodal curricular transformation alone. As Jason Palmeri notes, that process involves programmatic revisions that negotiate multiple stakeholders, documents, technologies, and spaces. Such work is difficult. Change, especially within the academy, is always difficult.

However, it is absolutely necessary if composition programs are to remain relevant and viable in the current moment and if we wish to expand our students' composing practices, making them more rhetorically adroit. The findings and insights I present here pose problems and possibilities for those who direct composition programs. First, if our outcomes offer insights into what our programs value, these outcomes suggest that we do not yet value multimodality in the way our published scholarship suggests we should or perhaps in the way that the sheer volume of scholarship on multimodality suggests we already do. This is because we continue to privilege a way of making and sharing meaning tied to print, to alphabetic writing. Programs that want to integrate multimodality into their curricula might use these findings to begin considering the ways in which their current outcomes (de) value certain curricular content. WPAs might engage these conversations in professional development meetings, instructional staff retreats, or during instructor training. Even if those programs do not implement multimodal composition curricula, the conversations about values can be helpful. Second, not all "multimodal" outcomes accomplish the same things. As I have illustrated here, multimodal outcomes achieve what our research suggests they should when those outcomes invite students both to understand the potentialities and drawbacks of different modes and to enact multimodal rhetorical performances using that knowledge. Through this process, they develop the theoretical and practical knowledge necessary to compose in and across multiple contexts. Rhetoric is what is necessary here. This demonstrates to me that we do not need a category of outcomes specifically dedicated to multimodality. Rather, we need more outcomes dedicated to cultivating in students a capacious understanding of rhetoric, because those are the outcomes that make space for multimodal composition curricula. WPAs could use this knowledge to return to and re-evaluate their own programs, offering workshops about rhetoric and rhetorical concepts to help instructors strengthen their proficiency with the concept as a way to make space for multimodality. These efforts will provide those of us who work in composition programs a way forward at the intersection of national documents, disciplinary practices, and local values, ensuring that the definition of, orientation to, and vision for composition that we present to students is truly indicative of what we know about this work.

Notes

1. In *Remixing Composition*, Jason Palmeri works to recover moments in the history of composition when multimodal pedagogies and curricula existed. In so doing, he shows that "compositionists have a rich multimodal heritage that we can build upon in order to reimagine contemporary practices" (149). While this

may be the case, I would argue that that heritage does not inform most composition programs.

2. Four programs selected "Not Sure." The totals from those coded statements are included in table 1, even if they are not addressed individually in this article.

3. *WPA OS* 3.0 does offer a more capacious definition, as "critical thinking, reading, and composing," in which one of the outcomes reads "use composing and reading for inquiry, learning, critical thinking, and communicating in various rhetorical contexts" ("WPA Outcomes"). Here, the outcome does not prescribe writing as the vehicle in/through which inquiry and learning occur. However, the *WPA OS* is slow to have effect on local programs (Isaacs and Knight). It is unlikely that this revision could have had the intended influence on curriculum at the time of this data collection. Thus, while these outcomes do good work emphasizing the importance of research and writing to learn, they continue to perpetuate the privileged position of print in the academy and leave little space to value multimodality.

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Book Review

Making Class Visible

Darin L. Jensen

Carter, Genesea M., and William H. Thelin, editors. *Class in the Composition Classroom: Pedagogy and the Working Class*. Utah State UP, 2017. 363 pages.

Working in postsecondary classrooms for nearly two decades has facilitated a growing class consciousness in my teaching, scholarship, and community engagement. As a TA eighteen years ago, I didn't know how to effectively engage and teach rural working-class students at my state university. Were they ill-prepared? Why couldn't they write in standard English? Do they belong here? Looking back, I'm sure my professors were asking the same things about me. Years later, I faced similar circumstances when I taught in a majority minority neighborhood, one that was poor and working class. My students were bringing different experiences, gifts, and languages to my classroom. Was I ready to receive these gifts? Was I ready to teach these students? No. Are most of us who teach writing? My guess is no.

Class is taboo and under researched. We don't talk about class. It didn't come up in my first graduate degree. And even though I am a first-generation college graduate, the son of a printer and bookkeeper, I didn't have any idea about how class shaped my academic experiences and life until years after I entered a university as an undergraduate. I am not alone. When asked, most Americans would say they are middle class. This is surprising given the increasing income inequality in the United States. Michael Zweig makes a compelling argument that Americans are majority working class. For writing teachers, these facts bring up important questions for the design of our programs and courses as well as our own pedagogy. We might ask: if class is taboo and invisible, how do I develop my pedagogy to serve these students rather than force middle-class assimilation onto them? How do I help them develop a literacy that honors where they are from rather than dismisses it? It is imperative that we develop an awareness that most stu-

dents in first-year writing classes are working class and have been shaped by the great recession and widening income inequality, and most importantly, that it is our work to meet and serve these students in the classroom.

Carter and Thelin's collection *Class in the Composition Classroom: Pedagogy and the Working Class* begins to frame out answers to these questions. The editors argue that "education, especially composition studies, must respond to features of teaching that subtly or blatantly alienate working-class students and set up further obstacles for them to overcome in order to succeed" (9). This argument is exigent as austerity measures reduce funding for students and as rhetorics of completion and persistence come to dominate some of our discussions. This volume directly addresses class as an important, and overlooked, component of these discussions. Moreover, the collection is an important contribution to the conversation about the praxis of writing instruction—how our teaching and research form an important reciprocal cycle.

Frankly, this collection is one I wish I had as a graduate student all those years ago. It would have been a revelation. For me, a key audience for this book is graduate students. Many graduate students do not come from the working class and are in graduate programs because they have the literacies of the academy—thus, they may not come to the work of teaching writing with the awareness or skills to teach all students, especially working-class students who inhabit their classrooms. This volume represents an important contribution to the field because it provides the context graduate students and perhaps many of our colleagues need to serve our increasingly diverse students. The volume accomplishes two goals. First, it examines class, which is undertheorized and needs more attention. In the afterword, Zebroski asserts that this work is a "return to social class, tracking its changes, updating and complicating concepts of social class and class identity" (321). This claim is borne out, as is an intersectional examination of class. One of the strengths in Carter and Thelin's work on class is that they define and allow for competing definitions of class. The introduction itself is an excellent contribution to the field and is something that I would want new TAs and all community college instructors to read. Two-year college instructors do not always have the benefit of being resourced to have a WPA or even having what they recognize as a writing program. This volume provides sorely needed context for two-year college instructors and two-year writing courses as these are the institutions and professors who teach the most working-class and first-generation students. Second, it concentrates mostly on first-year writing, which as Carolyn Calhoon-Dillahunt said in her 2018 CCCC chair's address is central to our discipline and professions. First-year writing is often a gatekeeping course. And it is the only course

that exists in some fashion at nearly every institution. We must understand how our work in these classes invites or alienates our students.

In many of the chapters, the contributors undertake the work of examining a nuanced intersectional framework of class. In Aaron Barlow and Patrick Corbett's chapter "Implications of Redefining 'Working-Class' in the Urban Composition Classroom," the authors examine the "social reality" of their students, noting that first year composition is "complicated by a hidden, but acute, divide between how class (particularly the working class) is addressed institutionally and as part of pedagogy" (60–61). These authors call on faculty to "recognize the extent of difference" with working-class urban students (61). While this phrase doesn't seem to be intersectional at first glance, the authors spend time defining who these students are, noting that students at their school arrive from 138 countries and are racially diverse. What ties these students together, though, is their socioeconomic class position. Barlow and Corbett go on to say the faculty at their school value "cross-cultural competencies" but that that valuation turns to frustration when matters of class are considered (62). Our view is incomplete. After teaching in an urban community college for eight years, the authors' assertion that "within this cluster of material, ideological, and cultural conditions, implementing the best pedagogical advances of our field is an ongoing challenge" rings true (63). For the authors, a successful pedagogy is one that includes the totality of the student, including their class position. It is this perspective that moves our pedagogy to a more complete and holistic footing.

Continuing with an intersectional look at class is Brett Griffiths and Christie Toth's chapter "Rethinking Class: Poverty, Pedagogy, and Two-Year College Writing Programs." The chapter examines two case studies, one in a two-year college outside of Detroit and the other a two-year tribal college in the southwest United States. They look at the educational impact of poverty in two-year college composition classrooms. The authors coin the phrase "poverty effects," which I think is more intellectually honest than "noncognitive issues," a term which has come to cover the source of low persistence and completion in developmental education and two-year colleges. Griffiths and Toth define "poverty effects" as "the combined social, emotional, and material impacts of poverty that can disproportionately influence the behaviors, learning, and other academic performances of working-class and working-poor students" (231). This definition is comprehensive and is an important frame for understanding the challenges of teaching students affected by this environment. The case studies examine how few instructors even use the word poverty to describe the conditions in which their students lived. Griffiths and Toth examine instructors'

responses to poverty and found that accommodation was the most frequent response, "most commonly through flexible course policies" (247). Their findings point to a need for structural responses to poverty rather than "heroic" actions of individual teachers. Importantly, they note the challenge of providing a systemic response in part due to funding, but also because "such initiatives [are] contingent on consistent efforts to make a continuously changing student body aware of what is available, which in turn depends on an informed, engaged, and stable faculty willing and able to connect students with these resources" (254–55). This point seems especially important to WPAs who manage large numbers of contingent faculty or graduate students. How do we create stable systemic responses to class in shifting conditions, many of which are out of faculty control?

In addition to an intersectional lens on class, the volume has contributions that look at the histories and norms working-class students bring to the classroom. Cori Brewster in "Social Economies of Literacy in Rural Oregon: Accounting for Diverse Sponsorship Histories of Working-Class Students in and Out of School" looks to the history and location of working-class students' literacies. Brewster came to this research from two angles—first, she and her colleagues were aware that they didn't know enough about the kind of writing experiences students had before they came to her campus. Second, she undertook this research as a way of providing a more nuanced portrait of literacy, one that was elided in her state's big data assessment. Brewster applies Deborah Brandt's theory of literacy sponsors here because it is "especially useful in describing the diversity and complexity of rural students' literacies across the United States" (213).

Brewster interviewed 52 students for her study and reports a complex range of literacy sponsorship, ranging from students who self-sponsored and resisted traditional school literacy to students who were sponsored by their teachers and who were more easily initiated into secondary education. Brewster's analysis leads her to assert that student literacies and themes are diverse and that sometimes instructors have "broad and ill-informed assumptions about rural and working-class students that still so often surface in legislative, institutional, and classroom contexts" (226). She goes on to say that teachers must consider the diverse literacies which students bring to the classroom and to make sure that we foster an awareness of the "real consequences for students" that emerge from our "indexing rural to illiterate" (227). Brewster's second suggestion is to make visible "at all levels" assessment and the systems and structures underlying them. These suggestions and her nuancing of working-class and rural literacy are valuable for WPAs, especially as a way to make literacies visible to administrators and legislators beyond mere quantitative data.

Likewise, Middleton's chapter on the alienation narrative of working-class students looks at working-class students' identities. Middleton engages with Donna LeCourt's work on the "alienation narrative," extending this work by examining how institutions need to serve the student rather than assimilate them into middle-class cultural norms (179). The author draws upon a body of scholarship on interdependent and independent norms. Middleton points to the privileging of independence as a cultural value in the university, but interdependence as a cultural norm of first generation students. To help develop the value of interdependence, she created a course called "Writing as Advocacy." In it "students adopted the subject role of advocate and were asked to read, write, and act on another's behalf" (179). For Middleton, the work of this course, while complex for the students, allows the class to address the alienation narrative. The attention to identity that Brewster and Middleton's chapters foster is important for our students and for the work of writing studies because it focuses our work on students who are often left behind.

Overall, this collection is an important contribution to the field and brings class to the conversation in a way that I haven't seen in composition studies. The book's chapters cover an impressive range of topics, including literacy, adult education, the two-year college, identity, and pedagogy. Further, it takes seriously the voices of students. This collection is of value to graduate students and instructors alike. The collection is impressive in its attention to nuanced thinking about class and in its focus on first-year writing. Further, it's of special value to WPAs because people in that role contend with professional development, issues of pedagogy, and resources in environments that are often difficult. Two-year colleges and other access-intensive institutions where the large majority of working-class students begin their postsecondary education will be able to use this book to great benefit. This volume raises the visibility of working-class students and values them; thus reframing how we teach and interact with our students so that we are mindful of the literacies, differences, and gifts our intersectional working-class 21st century students bring is a matter of best practice and a matter of justice and equity.

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Book Review

Traveling to New and Familiar Places: A Review of *WPAs in Transition*

Kristi Murray Costello

Adams Wooten, Courtney, Jacob Babb, and Brian Ray, editors. *WPAs in Transition: Navigating Educational Leadership Positions*. Utah State UP, 2018. 321 pages.

As a WPA who recently moved across the country to take on a newly established WPA position, I found particular resonance with Courtney Adams Wooten, Jacob Babb, and Brian Ray's *WPAs in Transition: Navigating Educational Leadership Positions* reliance on travel as a metaphor for WPA transitions, and I suspect their efforts toward inclusivity led others to feel similarly. The volume establishes from its first sentence the ways in which it intends to reach WPAs across diverse roles, ranks, cultures, contexts, and institutions, and it contains works from the perspectives of contingent, interim, graduate student, tenure-track, and tenured administrators, directors, assistant directors, and site directors. Authors tackle issues of gender, race, and status from many institutions, including two-year, four-year, small liberal arts, HBCUs, and the United States Air Force Academy. These inclusions not only represent our field's expansive breadth of experiences but encourage unity among all of us in the field, including those too often left out of the conversation.

WPAs in Transition is divided into four sections: Power and Agency, Identities and Subjectivities, Collaborations and Dialogues, and Disruption and Activism. The four chapters in section 1: Power and Agency "contemplate the power that WPAs actually have, the role that power plays in their efforts to support and develop their programs, and the agency they have as WPAs" (14). A natural choice to open the collection, Karen Keaton Jackson's "A State of Permanent Transition: Strategies for Surviving in an Ever-

Present Marginal Space" uses John Kotter's "What Leaders Really Do" as a touchstone to explore what it means to be both leader and manager, ultimately illustrating the ways in which one can concurrently inhabit both roles. While Jackson does address the limitations to inhabiting multiple roles, such as exhaustion and decreased accessibility, she also shares with us potential affordances of liminal realities (34–35). "Being in the margins," she writes, "means the rules are still being formulated and often we can determine how much of a part we want to play in that process" (36).

The second piece, "Suddenly WPA: Lessons from an Early and Unexpected Transition" by Chris Blankenship, describes how he inherited of a director of composition position despite taking steps to avoid administrative duties pre-tenure. Blankenship's story is well told and all too familiar: he relays the back-and-forth negotiations he engaged in over release time and contract length; he describes coping with colleague resentment; and he observes how men's arguments regarding labor and compensation are often better received than those made by women—a point he openly and refreshingly acknowledges. For me, the highlight of this chapter is Blankenship's inclusion of the email he sent to his chair rejecting the university's initial offer, which I fully expect to return to if faced with a similar situation (42–43). Like Jackson, Blankenship ultimately shares with us the glass-half-full perception of his efforts; the next WPA received the same course reassignment he had, suggesting that his negotiations had a lasting impact on the university's composition program and perception of WPA work. The collection's authors do not shy away from the struggles of WPA realities, but they also display their ability and willingness to examine the positive aspects of their experiences and reframe missteps as teachable moments. For example, Jennifer Riley Campbell and Richard Colby's rhetorical reexamining of responses to teaching observations in the third chapter helps to ensure that the book lifts readers up instead of weighing us down (58–59; 64).

The last chapter in section 1, Talinn Phillips, Paul Shovlin, and Megan Titus' "'An Exercise in Cognitive Dissonance': Liminal WPA Transitions," focuses on survey data derived from four gWPAs. The data represent the struggles liminal WPAs experience, such as the lack of authority needed to set clear boundaries and "lack of protection" (74–75). As I when I first read Phillips, Shovlin, and Titus' 2014 *WPA* article "Thinking Liminally: Exploring the (com)Promising Positions of the Liminal WPA," I was struck by the authors' choice to refer to itinerant WPAs as *liminals*, a jarring term that conjures within the reader the very tensions and dissonance their findings suggest. The chapter concludes with a helpful list of recommendations for those in non-liminal positions to support liminals, arguing, "it is far easier to offer those with power advice on how to support liminals in their

transitions than it is to give liminals advice on how to negotiate those transitions" (82).

Section 2: Identities and Subjectivities explores "how our work as WPAs impacts our professional and personal identities and how our subjectivity shapes and is shaped by our role as administrators" (15). The section begins with Andrea Scott's "Defining Disciplinarity at Moments of Transition" and Kate Pantelides' "The Joys of WPAhood: Embracing Interruption in the Personal and the Professional," which both disrupt existing narratives of disciplinary identity. Scott, who has a PhD in literature and whose work in a multidisciplinary writing program led to her decision join the field of writing studies complicates the field's conversion narratives, arguing that embracing a "more synergetic disciplinary ethos may help us reimagine" the work of the field "as the dappled purview of many disciplines" (98). Scott further argues that the field's perpetuation of competition narratives between composition and other fields, especially literature, does not do us any favors and ultimately furthers "stereotypes about both fields" (88). In the chapter to follow, Pantelides interrupts the myths of the *superparent* and *superWPA* and challenges notions that parents and WPAs need to hide "any challenges in balancing the personal and the professional" (101). Continuing with the book's successful approach of finding affordances in what may often be construed as obstacles, Scott illustrates how the intersections of her literature and WPA backgrounds open up new disciplinary ways of seeing that inform and enhance her scholarship, and Pantelides suggests embracing the dual roles of parent and WPA and practicing impiousness, explaining: "We *need* to be impious. We need to be honest. We need to be actively looking for joy and be able to recognize it when it appears, hold onto it when we can, and embrace the next interruption as mindfully as we are able" (109).

These interruptions are followed by Rebecca Jackson, Jackie Grutsch McKinney, and Nicole I. Caswell's "Metaphors We Work By: New Writing Center Directors' Labor and Identities"—which should serve as required reading for all incoming WCDs—and Amy Rupiper Taggart's "Reseeing the WPA Skill Set: GenAdmins Transitioning from WPA to University Pedagogical Leadership"—which should be required reading for all current WPAs. Jackson, Grutsch McKinney, and Caswell's study of nine new writing center directors illuminates the uncertain and high-pressure transitions of new directors articulating what many of us, not just WCDs, need to hear our first couple of years in a job. They note,

> no matter how strong the director's preparation—whether a PhD in rhetoric and composition, a dissertation in Writing Center studies, coursework in administration, years of writing center experience—or confidence going into their job, each had to learn to negotiate the system in which they worked. (122)

As they note, transitioning into a new role is a process, and the process of transitioning takes time (111). But what about when transitions are "forced" and "unanticipated," as a result of crisis (155)? To this end, Rupiper Taggart shows us how WPAs can "reflect on the broader skill and knowledge sets we possess and their relevance in other institutional spaces" (154), while also reflecting on the culture shock and feelings of loss WPAs can experience when negotiating new roles (163–66).

Completing the second section are Beth Huber's "Get Offa My Lawn! Generational Challenges of WPAs in Transition" and Steven J. Corbett's "Performance Attribution and Administrative (Un)Becoming: Learning to Fail While Trying to Fly," both of which illustrate the importance of reflection in understanding the situatedness of the present. Huber chronicles how the transitions of the four Western Carolina University WPAs parallel the national profession revealing the ways each new WPA pushed and pulled—pushing against the previous WPA's philosophies and practices and pulling as they benefit from the foundations laid by their predecessors. Huber insightfully concludes that, while none of them made it easy on their predecessors or successors, conflict propels programs forward just as such conflict has propelled the field forward (128; 136). In a similar vein, Corbett draws

> on research in knowledge transfer and productive failure . . . and [his] own experience . . . to highlight why coming to terms with and learning from failure is an important, even necessary, part of the training and professional work of the WPA. (140)

As I read through section 3: Collaborations and Dialogues, I particularly enjoyed the different representations of collaboration. In "You Say Goodbye, I Say Hello," Letiza Guglielmo and Beth Daniell describe their complicated transitions as their institution merged with another; they pause frequently and thoughtfully to consider the impact on the other school's WPA and their faculty colleagues and to highlight the chaos that can ensue, resentments that can form, and lessons that can be learned when universities impulsively make big moves. While Guglielmo and Daniell's piece shows how order can morph quickly into chaos, Tereza Joy Kramer, Jaquelyn Davis, Holland Enke, and Reyna Olegarion's "The Collaborative WPA: Bringing a Writing Center Ethos to WAC" shows how collabora-

tion and community can turn chaos into harmony as well as help ease the transition of WPAs.

In fact, I was still glowing from the feel-good resonance of Kramer et. al's story of establishing a thriving WAC/WID/WC community enhanced by their demonstration of collaborative authorship, when I began reading Laura Davies' "Command and Collaboration: Leading as a New WPA." Davies explores the roots, risks, and rewards of collaboration and command theory, illustrating how they are "far more complicated and complementary than they may seem" (198). Through detailing her experience as WPA at the United States Air Force Academy and performing a close reading of Louise Wetherbee Phelps' essay "Becoming a Warrior: Lessons Learned of the Feminist Workplace," Davies shows how both strategies can be useful for transitioning WPAs. As someone whose first inclination is almost always collaboration, Davies explanation of command theory as creative and able to foster definitive roles and boundaries was eye-opening and persuasive (193).

The third section ends with the expertly placed "There and Back Again, Sort Of: Returning as WPA (and Preparing to Leave)" by Chris Warnick, which reiterates one of the points made in the introduction: WPAs "make multiple transitions throughout their careers" not just as they enter and leave positions. Warnick, who returns to WPA work after a hiatus suggests that literacy brokering—serving as a "go-betwee[n] in literacy exchanges" (220)—is a potential strategy for negotiating "the emotions involved in crucial transitions" (221) and staying "focused on the stakeholders' interests rather than [his] own" (225).

Section 4: Disruption and Activism begins with Sarah Stanley's "Revolving Doors and Settled Locks: Staying Put in an Undesirable Place," which complicates the practice of stepping-stone academic placements, revealing how her disconnection from the WPA community and discourse led to her remaining in her WPA position. Stanley speculates that, if she had a connection to others in the field and field lore during that time, she likely would have left. She also contends that her departure would have diminished the opportunities and success she has experienced in her current position and institutional context (236), which includes not only being a WPA, but also "a volunteer, a board member, and an activist" (242). Stanley convincingly argues that "electing to try, acquire, and learn impacts places, and writing may only truly 'flourish' when the WPA is trusted," which means that WPAs should also consider "staying put" (233–35). Later in this section, in "Fostering Ethical Transitions: Creating Community as Writing Program Administrators," Bradley Smith and Kerri K. Morris illustrate how to create community, collaboration, and program coherence that can withstand (and

even be informed by) WPA transitions and different perspectives. To this end, Smith and Morris weave their individual WPA origin stories, process analysis detailing how they developed a cohesive pedagogical vision among a "disparate group of teachers tasked with teaching in a first-year writing program," theoretical grounding for their approach, and reflection about what ultimately worked or didn't together toward defining, illustrating, and advocating for "coming together" (261; 70).

The remaining three chapters in section 4 argue for inclusiveness and activism. In "Connection, Community, and Identity: Writing Programs and WPAs at the Community College," Mark Blaauw-Hara and Cheri Lemieux Spiegel illustrate through an effective balance of well-paced, compelling narrative and equally compelling analysis the struggles of community college WPAs to find communities of practice (CoP), access pertinent scholarship, and gain recognition and support in the field and within their institutions. Using their roles within the broader CWPA community as evidence, they posit that "engagement with the larger WPA community can support those transitioning into WPA roles at community colleges" (247). Molly Tetreault's chapter, "Writing Center Professionals, Marginalization, and the Faculty/Administrator Divide" also stems from feelings of marginalization. A condescending experience at a conference illuminated the ways in which the field's focus "on job status as a measure of marginalization . . . undermin[es] attempts to bring WCPs out of the margins" (274), inspiring her call for dismantling the hierarchal assumptions that can make some feel unwelcome (282). The final chapter, Liliana M. Naydan's "Transitioning from Contingent to Tenure-Track Faculty Status as a WPA: Working toward Solidarity and Academic-Labor Justice through Hybridity," is perhaps the culminating argument for inclusion. Naydan describes the power dynamics experienced and lessons learned from two disparate WPA positions, "a contingent faculty WPA who ran a writing center at an institution with a labor union for contingent faculty" and "a tenure-track assistant-professor WPA at an institution that lacks a faculty labor union," toward arguing that "working toward labor justice in solidarity across disciplines . . . [is] a means by which to transition into having *actual* power on the job" (294).

Throughout *WPAs in Transition*, metaphors for WPA work and transitions are developed, examined, and complicated. Participants in Jackson, Grutsch McKinney, and Caswell's study refer to WPA work as being like "conducting an orchestra," "playing Tetris," and "juggling" (114–15). Huber conjures the images of WPAs past as "giants and ghosts" (127); Stanley compares it to cultivating a garden (149), and Riley Campbell and Colby explore metaphors of servers and cooks toward showing how such metaphors can limit our understanding of our roles and progress therein

(52). As Jackson, Grutsch McKinney, and Caswell explain in their chapter, within our metaphors "there are hints of how [our[particular contexts shape [our] telling" (120). Thus, as I completed the volume, I returned to Adams Wooten, Babb, and Ray's choice of travel as their metaphor for WPA transitions.

Each of the chapters in this collection include reflection about the journeys of WPAs—the pit-stops, potholes, traffic, and lookout points, and, through showing in the text's conclusion how "transfer can and should inform readers' interpretations of the transition narratives," Ray provides readers with a map for effectively navigating these multiple and varied locations (303). Though the metaphor of travel isn't explicit throughout, like a tourist, I was still able to spot something new in my visit to each chapter—new strategies or new ways of seeing—and to spot familiar landmarks to guide me when I'm feeling lost. In fact, I have a shelf of books that I keep nearby for those moments I feel overwhelmed, discouraged, or inspired to initiate change; *WPAs in Transition: Navigating Educational Leadership Positions* has already earned its place among them.

Note

Neither Courtney Adams Wooten nor Jacob Babb participated in the commissioning or editing of this review essay.

Work Cited

Phillips, Talinn, Paul Shovlin, and Megan Titus. "Thinking Liminally: Exploring the (com)Promising Positions of the Liminal WPA." *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, vol. 38, no. 1, pp. 42–64.

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Book Review

Rethinking and Revising: New Approaches for New Challenges

Rebecca Petitti

Isaacs, Emily J. *Writing at the State U: Instruction and Administration at 106 Comprehensive Universities*. Utah State UP, 2018. 229 pages.

Janangelo, Joseph, editor. *A Critical Look at Institutional Mission: A Guide for Writing Program Administrators*. Parlor P, 2016. 241 pages.

Siegel Finer, Bryna, and Jamie White-Farnham, editors. *Writing Program Architecture: Thirty Cases for Reference and Research*. Utah State UP, 2017. 479 pages.

On college campuses across the United States, WPAs work to cultivate a culture of writing among all university members. The goals of this shared culture of writing, and the form that it takes, may vary widely across local institutional contexts. Its construction is often determined at both the macro and micro levels: from the individual students served by the program, through the varying responsibilities of the program itself, up to the shared goals and values of higher administration and external benefactors. Yet, despite programs being situated within their own campus communities, there remain shared commitments and lessons connecting WPAs across contexts. This shared experience may include feelings of frustration towards budgetary or policy decisions, or feelings of excitement when innovative curricular changes pass campus committees. Responsible for everything from FYC to writing centers, writing minors to writing majors, the complexity and span of WPA work means that WPAs are often networked across a campus community. At the same time, WPAs may also find themselves as the singular or primary writing resource on their given campus. Being in this position often means little opportunity for localized support and resources and can lead to WPA work feeling solitary or isolating.

Despite this potential solitude, there is a large external community of WPA experience and resources to provide support. From regional and national conferences to journals and the connections forged in online spaces, WPAs can find the mentoring and support that might not be available within their given programmatic structures. Despite differences across

local institutional structures, this larger external network offers resources and potential solutions to be adapted within a localized context. The three texts reviewed here offer external guidance and pragmatic support for WPAs across institutional contexts. While WPAs work to nurture a culture of writing across their campuses, these texts foster a culture for the administrative work that goes into these initiatives and offer a source of community and support for WPAs across the US. Taken together, these books highlight the importance of localized context in writing program administration and demonstrate the benefits of transparency in WPA work, showing that there is much to be learned from prior experiences, both good and bad. By offering several examples of different institutional sizes, types, and structures, these texts are accessible to WPAs across US institutional contexts. They offer community, mentorship, and guidance through shared anecdotal experience, statistical analyses, and stories of success and failure. Across these books, writing program administration is explored in all its facets: from writing majors to FYC, creative writing to writing centers, and everything in between. These texts center the labor of WPAs: its variations, frustrations, joys, and rewards.

Emily Isaacs's *Writing at the State U: Instruction and Administration at 106 Comprehensive Universities* highlights the work of WPAs at state comprehensive universities (SCUs), while simultaneously demonstrating the benefits of and, the field's need for, bird's-eye studies of WPA work. Joseph Janangelo's *A Critical Look at Institutional Mission: A Guide for Writing Program Administrators* challenges WPAs to rethink their relationship with larger institutional mission and values, pushing past concerns of standardization to reflect on how these missions can help shape programmatic design and structure. Lastly, in *Writing Program Architecture: Thirty Cases for Reference and Research,* Bryna Siegel Finer and Jamie White-Farnham present thirty different case studies from institutions of various shapes and sizes; in doing so, they further highlight the joys and frustrations that WPAs share. Taken together, these books continue to make space for external guidance, mentorship, and pragmatic solutions to the problems that WPAs face at institutions across the US.

A Bird's-Eye View of the SCU

The most recent of these texts, and the only single-author monograph, is Emily Isaacs's *Writing at the State U*. Unlike the other two texts which are both edited collections with contributions from WPAs representing all types of institutions, Isaacs's study is focused on a single institution type: SCUs. Isaacs argues that this perspective is underrepresented in WPA

research, writing "the scholarly conversation on writing program administration [is] so often set within the context of the research university, or, less frequently, the small college" (3). Isaacs's study presents the opportunity to think more broadly across a singular institutional context, which stands in contrast to the two edited collections which offer more opportunity for cross-institutional research regardless of structure or institutional type. Despite being situated within a specific institutional structural context, Isaacs's work is transferrable across contexts and institutional types, in no small part because of her commitment to methodological transparency and her detailed focus on research design. The edited collections, which I will talk more about in the following sections, are built around case studies, interviews, and anecdotal data, while Isaacs's corpus is made up of publicly-available materials collected from 106 university websites. This "bird's-eye approach," not typical of WPA research, allows Isaacs to look broadly across institutions to consider the patterns and trends at SCUs. Although this approach "does not tell you *why* phenomena have occurred," it can tell "you *what* occurred" (9). This focus on what creates opportunities for future research that can look more in depth at specific patterns to move into understanding the why.

From the start, Isaacs offers detailed discussion and explanations of her approach to this research and the methods employed. Regarding her study design, and arguing for the benefits of empirical research, Isaacs expresses a desire for "a method that would enable [her] to speak broadly about national trends" (5). She describes *Writing at the State U* as providing "historical context while capitalizing on publicly available data and fairly simple statistical analyses that have not been used by researchers who have conducted 'status' research of this nature" (12). What Isaacs offers throughout this book is a new way of analyzing writing programs and the work they do, demonstrating the usefulness and possibilities of empirical WPA research. This commitment to and focus on methods makes this book particularly well-suited for graduate students and other early-stage researchers, as it explores the process behind designing a study centered around empirical research. Isaacs carefully presents balanced reflection of her methods, recognizing both the limitations and potential of empirical WPA research and raising important questions for all researchers to consider. In advocating for empirical research, Isaacs points to the possibility of self-selection data skew, referring to data collection from only those who "opt in" to particular research projects. She argues that "any real understanding of the impact of our field requires that we gather and report on what is happening at institutions that are not part of our community as defined by membership in one of our field's organization" (9). At the same time, Isaacs recog-

nizes the limitation of her large scope approach, noting that "the approach precludes a close view, so texture, details, and, most of all, explanations for choices made are not provided" (9). This weighing of options and possibilities granted by different methodological approaches both demonstrates the process behind designing a research study, while also serving as an example of innovative research and new ways of approaching WPA research.

In addition to her opening methodological chapter, Isaacs offers a detailed methods appendix. In the appendix, Isaacs briefly describes her training in research methodology, and how it has evolved over time. By providing an in-depth discussion of her methodological decisions and process, Isaacs illustrates the importance of the research process, granting it equal weight to the findings themselves. This attention to methodology is something Isaacs explicitly discusses when talking about previous research studies. Before delving into the findings from her own study, Issacs presents readers with a history of prior, related research in her second chapter, "Assessment of Writing Studies' Practices: 1927 to the Present Study." While this historical overview provides important context of the studies that Isaacs draws on, it further highlights Isaacs's belief that, while the findings themselves do matter, they can only be understood within the context of methodology. In discussing the focus and findings of this prior research, Isaacs notes that "I believe research findings on such topics as class size or institutional home is best understood in the context of the methodologies researchers employ" (34). This is further illustrated through the accompanying table of "Major studies of the state of writing programs, instruction, and administration," which—by including the title, author, year of data collection and publication, and the method details—places emphasis on the data and methods, with little focus on the findings (35–37). Unlike much of the research on writing programs and WPA labor that exists, Isaacs presents quantitative and statistical analyses, offering new ways of discussing and presenting WPA practices as well as conducting this kind of research. It is this detail that, again, makes *Writing at the State U* a particularly useful resource for graduate students and early-stage researchers, especially those looking to do quantitative work.

Following these introductory chapters are three chapters presenting Isaacs's key findings related to the institutional support (infrastructure, policies, and resources) provided to FYC, FYC curriculum and classroom practices, and the kinds of writing that happen beyond FYC. Although the theme of these findings can be seen across other research studies, Issacs's bird's-eye scope and focus on SCUs offers a new lens for studying WPA labor and conditions as well as FYC programs in specific institutional settings. By focusing on publicly available materials, Isaacs analyzes what pro-

grams "promise" their external audiences as well as what happens within classrooms and across curricula. Rather than focusing on interviews, which may potentially be skewed by an individual's hopes and visions for a program (Isaacs talks about this potential skew in chapter one), these materials are more objective, identifying the program's mission and goals. While this objectivity may not always reflect the practiced reality, it illustrates programmatic goals and shared interests, as well as highlighting what gets communicated to external audiences.

In her concluding chapter, Isaacs summarizes her study, suggesting that "it is clear that the influence of the field is felt across the country, at both large and small universities and in every region" (159). She goes on to posit that "the study also reveals that several of the core values of the discipline have deeply influenced the curricula of first-year composition" (161). Returning to some of Isaacs's opening points, *Writing at the State U* does not explain why this influence is present or how it came to be a part of FYC curricula across the country. Rather, it identifies these overarching patterns across 106 institutions, and leaves the work of how and why for future researchers and studies.

Isaacs's book can serve as a methodological beacon for those hoping to design their own project, showing us that how findings are achieved is just as important as the findings themselves. At the same time, Isaacs's bird's-eye approach offers new perspectives on old problems, challenging researchers to think about the work they do and how they achieve outcomes. The following sections will look at two edited collections, each of which shares with Isaacs's book the usefulness and guidance for WPAs in need of solutions, while differing in approach.

Cross-Institutional Perspectives: A Focus on Mission

Unlike Isaacs's focus on a specific institutional structure, Joseph Janangelo's edited collection *A Critical Look at Institutional Mission: A Guide for Writing Program Administrators* presents case studies from a wide variety of institutions, including two-year colleges, religiously affiliated universities, and four-year public and private institutions. The case studies presented in this collection use locality to argue for the importance of explicit connection between a writing program's mission and the broader goals and values of an institution, where one can be used to inform the other. In his introduction, Janangelo defines institutional mission statements as "markers of identity and hallmarks of accomplishment," going on to argue that institutional mission can evoke "a legacy of scholarship and pedagogy that contemporary stakeholders can use to steward their departments, programs,

and initiatives forward" (xi). From this definition, Janangelo contends that mission "tells us *why* we do what we do" (xii). The case studies presented throughout the collection show the complexity and challenges of aligning with a given mission and explore how institutional mission situates WPA work within a given context. As Janangelo points out, where one works greatly impacts the how, why, and what of that work (xiv).

The book is divided into three parts: "Connecting and Contending," "Designing and Discerning," and "Relating, Reflecting, and Resisting." The chapters within each part reflect the different problems WPAs face, and the ways that institutional mission might be used to address them. While this structure emphasizes the potential of and opportunities granted by aligning with an institution's mission, I offer in my following discussion an alternative thematic organization of chapters as another way to think about alignment with institutional mission. This edited collection, while addressing the challenges aligning with an institutional mission, argues that WPAs can make these statements more than empty words used on recruitment documents by integrating university mission in curricular and programmatic design. The chapters in this book show how, because it is tied to personal beliefs, both religious and not, institutional mission can lead to a deeper connection within a community; how mission statements can be used to frame assessment and program design in ways that connect interdisciplinary audiences across campus; and lastly, how institutional mission serves as an important framework for undergraduate experience and expectations.

Throughout this collection, many authors speak of institutional mission as the values that drive both the institution itself and those who make up its community. In his chapter on the writing program at West Point Academy, Jason Hoppe argues that it is institutional mission that both fosters West Point's unique focus, while simultaneously making West Point more like other colleges and the "traditional" college experience. Throughout, Hoppe recognizes the markedly different student experience offered at West Point but notes that, by drawing upon the mission of the school, he was able to foster similarity and "diminish" some of the difference (93). As a United States Military Academy (USMA), West Point's mission is a balance of educating and training, a "perpetual tug of war between what it means to . . . foster academic pursuits and heed martial imperatives" (92). Hoppe describes his process of using this mission as a framework for the school's first writing fellows program and writing center, connecting these programs to not just the educational goal of the institution, but the martial and practical ones as well. He writes of designing a "strategic plan" for each of these programs that "ties the expansion of these endeavors to the

increasing engagement of other members of the USMA community" (95). Using the larger institutional mission, Hoppe was able to gain support for both the writing fellows program and writing center, connecting these programs to broader campus initiatives, student needs, and the concerns of higher administration.

Like Hoppe's use of institutional mission at West Point, authors at religious-affiliated institutions see their schools' missions as useful frameworks for designing programs and meeting external expectations. Kristine Hansen writes of student experience at Brigham Young University, a university affiliated with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In her analysis, she explores how institutional mission is used both to maintain ideologically driven goals and steer the university into the future, despite increasing secularism across most university campuses in the US. Similarly, Andrea Rosso Efthymiou and Lauren Fitzgerald explore how mission shapes student experience at Yeshiva University, "the first and largest US institution of higher education under Orthodox Jewish auspices" (169). Centering on the experience of undergraduate writing center tutors, they argue that mission can be used to help tutors see themselves as "rhetorical actors" who can both abide by and expand beyond institutional mission. Lastly, Joseph Janangelo's chapter about Loyola University Chicago highlights how institutional mission and students' expectations can clash with a university's other affiliations or identities. Loyola, a Jesuit Catholic university, faced criticism after refusing to host same-sex marriages at their on-campus chapel. Critics, including alumni, current students, and a host of online supporters, pointed to Loyola's mission statement which "'embrace[s] social justice'" and posits Loyola as a "'home for all [students]—embracing all races, sexes, gender identities, . . . [and] sexual orientations,'" arguing that this refusal was antithetical to the university's mission (205). At the same time, others pointed to Loyola's identity as Catholic institution, seeing this as "an adequate basis" for such refusal (208). This example highlights the various identities that institutions may have, as well as the various stakeholders they serve. Janangelo goes on to offer suggestions for institutions trying to balance conflicting identities, and how they might strategize institutional mission to better serve their campus communities.

In other contexts, institutional mission provides a framework for assessment and design across programs and campuses. While this use of mission as a framework can raise concern over institutional standardization and loss of departmental agency, the authors in this collection argue against these concerns. In his chapter on "Strategic Assessment," Nicholas Behm describes his work using mission statements at Elmhurst College to engage faculty across campus and develop an assessment methodology. Behm rec-

ognizes the difficulty of being the lone "assessment person" on campus, which is further troubled by resistance from his colleagues to both mission and assessment, again drawing attention to concerns about standardization. Nonetheless, Behm argues that "effective writing assessment develops organically out of the conditions, circumstances, curricula, and student needs that pervade institutional context" and advocates for an approach to assessment that is particular to a local context and shaped by a given institution and its own values (55). Like Behm, Anita M. DeRouen similarly explores mission-driven curriculum reform with her institution's General Education program, highlighting throughout her chapter the important lessons, or "Learning Points," from her experience. These learning points—which include the ways institutional mission can "provide valuable focal points" for reform (132), remarks on the importance of feedback and collaboration, and the time and patience involved with any level of reform and change—aim to help other faculty members facing similar reform at their own institutions. This sentiment is shared and expanded upon by Andrew Jeter, who, unlike other authors in the collection, moves outside of the university to show how his institution's mission was used in external community spaces, specifically an academic literacy program for a public, suburban high school.

Although there are no chapters wholly against mission-driven assessment, there are some authors who are more skeptical of these initiatives and who they serve, pointing to what they see as potential hazards of such work. For example, Jeffrey Klausman, in noting the shift toward a neoliberal vision of the future at his own two-year college, argues that any assessment or design led by institutional mission will only work to further the objectives of the neoliberal university. Similarly, Rita Malenczyk and Lauren Rosenberg show how an emphasis on mission at a public liberal arts school poses specific challenges, as institutional mission at these institutions is often "dictated by legislature" and external actors (151). In both cases, mission-driven curriculum and assessment may not align with the best practices of a discipline or the expectations of faculty. Rather, in these instances, institutional mission can be used to further support the goals of higher administration, goals that may conflict with those of WPAs and other faculty across campus.

Though many chapters consider how mission can be used for upholding values or curricular assessment, it can also play an important role in student experience and guiding students' expectations. Institutional mission statements frequently appear in recruitment materials, and while certainly not the driving force for students' decisions, can play a large part in what students expect from a given institution. In thinking about this relationship, Dominic DelliCarpini draws on physics to show how institutional mission defines rela-

tionships with internal and external stakeholders. He describes institutional mission as "the centripetal force that attempts to keep individual initiatives balanced between innovation and 'mission creep'" and credits institutional mission as being the drawing force that brings many different campus initiatives to a common focal point (4). Represented visually in the chapter, the mission statement serves as the center focal point of the larger campus community. It is the "centripetal force," drawing upon numerous campus initiatives and curricular design choices to bring together different aspects of the campus community. It becomes the anchor for student experience, where students' various campus encounters connect to a larger shared mission.

Putting this centripetal force metaphor into practice, Joyce Kinkead discusses how she used institutional mission at her US land-grant institution to create a new general education course that allowed students to better connect with the "*culture*" of their institution, its history, and the overarching mission. Kinkead describes how student experience was shaped by and benefited from drawing on the mission and shared history of land-grant institutions. While DelliCarpini and Kinkead both address the larger cultures and community of institutions, institutional mission can also be used to target and directly benefit underrepresented groups of students. Farrell J. Webb and Anita R. Cortez demonstrate this by showing how institutional mission served as a framework for creating "success programs" for underrepresented students at their research university, benefiting marginalized students and further enhancing their undergraduate experience.

Across *A Critical Look at Institutional Mission*, readers will find a variety of institutional types and structures, as well as different ways to engage institutional mission in programmatic design choices. This variety of institutional structures and different "ways in" to the text is shared in *Writing Program Architecture.* However, in this edited collection, readers move beyond engaging institutional mission to explore the vast expanse of WPA work and the very different responsibilities that WPAs face depending upon their local institutional context.

What We're Made of: Programmatic Architecture

Bryna Siegel Finer and Jamie White-Farnham's *Writing Program Architecture: Thirty Cases for Reference and Research*, like the books previously discussed, serves as a substantial resource, offering pragmatic guidance for new and veteran WPAs alike. It is likewise helpful to graduate students who may find themselves in WPA positions in the future, as the collection illustrates the complexities and span of WPA labor. The collection, with its inclusion of different institutional structures and writing program designs, shows

how different programs can approach the same issues as well as how varied the challenges are across different programs. Like Janangelo's edited collection, the authors throughout continue to highlight the importance of localized context, and while solutions are adaptable to different contexts, the where of WPA work remains of the utmost importance. While each case study recognizes its uniqueness to a given institution, this collection aims to reach WPAs at all career-stages, and "inform, inspire, and otherwise help [them] build new programs and sustain existing ones" (4).

From the start, Siegel Finer and White-Farnham establish their architectural metaphor as twofold, using it "both as a way to understand writing programs and as an organizational feature" for the book itself (4). They go on to argue that "exposing the architecture of writing programs," the goal of this edited collection, "has three purposes" (5). These purposes include foregrounding "elements of a program that are oftentimes treated as mundane background information," "serving a research function . . . [that] provides jumping off points to address and inspire myriad research questions," and lastly, modeling "a method for WPAs to consider and articulate their own programs' architecture" (5). The chapters in this collection, taken together, successfully serve these purposes in a way that is accessible and productive for readers.

Despite representing a wide variety of institutional types and writing program structures, the chapters in *Writing Program Architecture* follow a template, with the architecture of each chapter built by the same elements and focus. The elements included for each program, which are all explained in detail in the introduction, include: institutional demographics (type, location, enrollment, WPA reporting, funding, and a brief description of undergraduate students), a program snapshot, a WPA profile, program conception, population served, funding, operations, assessment, marketing, technology, role of research, pedagogical and/or administrative highlights, primary document description, and WPA's voice. This template helps illustrate shared concerns across institutional contexts and further demonstrates different ways of approaching similar scenarios. This construction helps demonstrate that, while on paper institutions may *seem* to have nothing in common, schools and programs across contexts might face similar or related challenges. It is additionally useful for doing cross-institutional research focused on a specific aspect of WPA work, but at locations with different demographics or hierarchical structures. This level of accessibility makes this book a great introduction to graduate students who might be thinking about WPA work across various institutional structures, while also serving as a great resource to new and veteran WPAs who may find themselves facing new challenges or who are situated in new contexts.

Accessible resources are at the core of this collection, reflected in both the introduction and its online compendium. In the collection's official table of contents, the case studies are organized by program type, including categorizations like "Writing and Communication Across the Curriculum" or "Integrated Programs." In their introduction, however, Siegel Finer and White-Farnham offer multiple "ways in" to the text with an alternative table of contents that directs readers to specific pages within each case study determined by the various template elements. This attention to alternative approaches based on each reader's needs makes the book more accessible to its many different audiences. Veteran WPAs may find it useful to target specific elements, like funding or assessment, while new WPAs may find it useful to read the book by program or institution type. Again, this level of accessibility also makes the book an ideal resource in a seminar or course on writing program administration, where students can be introduced to the many different program types and elements of a WPA position.

In addition to the expansive textual collection, this book also includes an online compendium comprising responses, reviews, and primary documents that accompany each case study. Within each chapter, there is a brief "primary document" description where authors describe their online compendium materials and why they chose to share these specific materials. Like the book itself, the online compendium is also a searchable resource, where users can search primary documents based on institution type, program type, or document type. This attention to search functionality further contributes to the accessibility of this book as a resource. Additionally, the online compendium's collection of primary documents illustrates that what is considered most representative or what matters most for any given program or institution can vary widely. Some examples of the document types shared include: annual reports, assessment related materials, evaluation forms (specifically those from writing centers), grant proposals, program/curriculum proposals, promotion materials, self-studies and evaluator reports, and syllabi and pedagogical materials, to name a few. These examples illustrate a few different points: First, they demonstrate the many facets of WPA work, from teacher training and curriculum design, to assessment, evaluation, and recruitment. Additionally, they further support the importance of local context. Within each case study chapter, the authors discuss the primary documents they included, and why they chose to share specific materials. What becomes evident is that what is most representative for a specific writing program is dependent upon a given local context, institutional history, and even point in time.

Something for Everyone

From graduate student to veteran WPA, from fellow administrators across campus looking to better understand the work of WPAs and everyone in between, there is something for everyone across each of these texts. Taken together, these books offer guidance and serve as a resource for aspiring, new, and veteran WPAs alike. While WPA work can sometimes feel isolated, and while at times WPAs face an uphill battle against budgetary cuts or cross-campus resistance, books like these offer a reminder of the community and network of support already in place. The research across these books, from the empirical analyses of Emily Isaacs to the more anecdotally driven work of the edited collections, illustrate the importance of localized context, while also showing how seemingly different institutions may share many of the same challenges.

With a wide focus on aspects of WPA work including FYC courses at SCUs, using institutional mission statements to assist in programmatic decision-making, and what shared elements of a WPA position look like at different institutions, these books serve a diverse audience. Graduate students facing a future in writing program administration will find honest depictions and discussion of the responsibilities that accompany this job. At the same time, they can serve as models for designing a research study and taking seriously the methodology of a given project, or instituting new programmatic initiatives inspired by local context. New WPAs will find resources and, potentially, solutions, for approaching new challenges they may face. This is true also of veteran WPAs who may find themselves in a new context or within a shifting structure bringing about new challenges. These books expand our methodological processes, showing different ways to approach shared challenges, keeping localized context at the fore. With this emphasis on context, these texts and their contributing authors challenge us to reflect on the work we do at our own institutions, requiring us to consider the challenges we may face and offering a myriad of ways to approach these problems.

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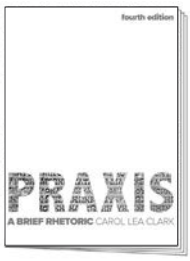

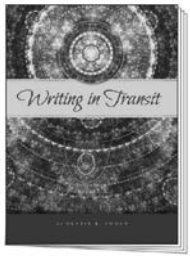

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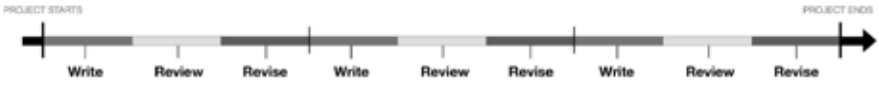

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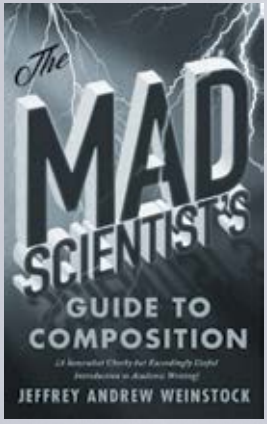

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