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

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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.

Student-specified aims

Formal Learning Goals and
WPAs' Aims

Share writing with diverse peers

learn about peer feedback

Develop writing based on feedback

practice communication processes

Opportunities for creative expression

Learn methods for writing

Adapt written ideas for different audiences

Practice peer feedback

Continually grow as a writer

Peer Feedback

revision based upon rereading own work

transfer to other college classes

Citation Practices

Learn & practice inquiry processes

Continual Growth

Communication

Set & revisit goals for writing

transfer to situations outside of school

Creativity

Process

Attribution

Purpose

Transfer

Inquiry

for those with limited time or resources

Evidence-based reasoning

Inclusive Teaching

for all life stages

Practicing attribution

Evaluating evidence & claims

Asset-based teaching

for all religious identities

for all racial identities

Coordinating evidence & claims

asset-based teaching approaches

connections between speaking and writing

for all nationalities and language backgrounds

for all gender identities

for those with learning disabilities

Emerging Learning Goals and Teaching Aims
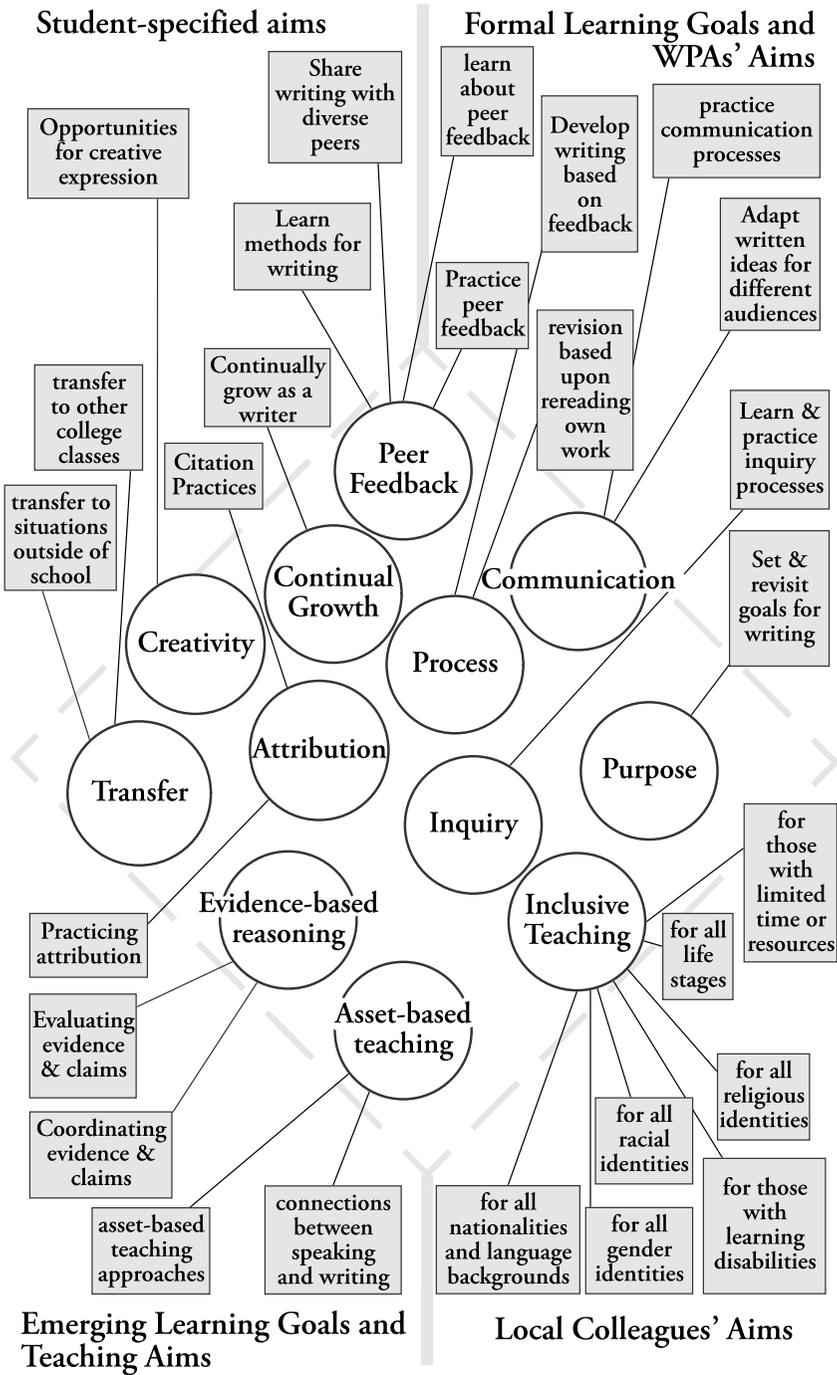
Local Colleagues' Aims

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).
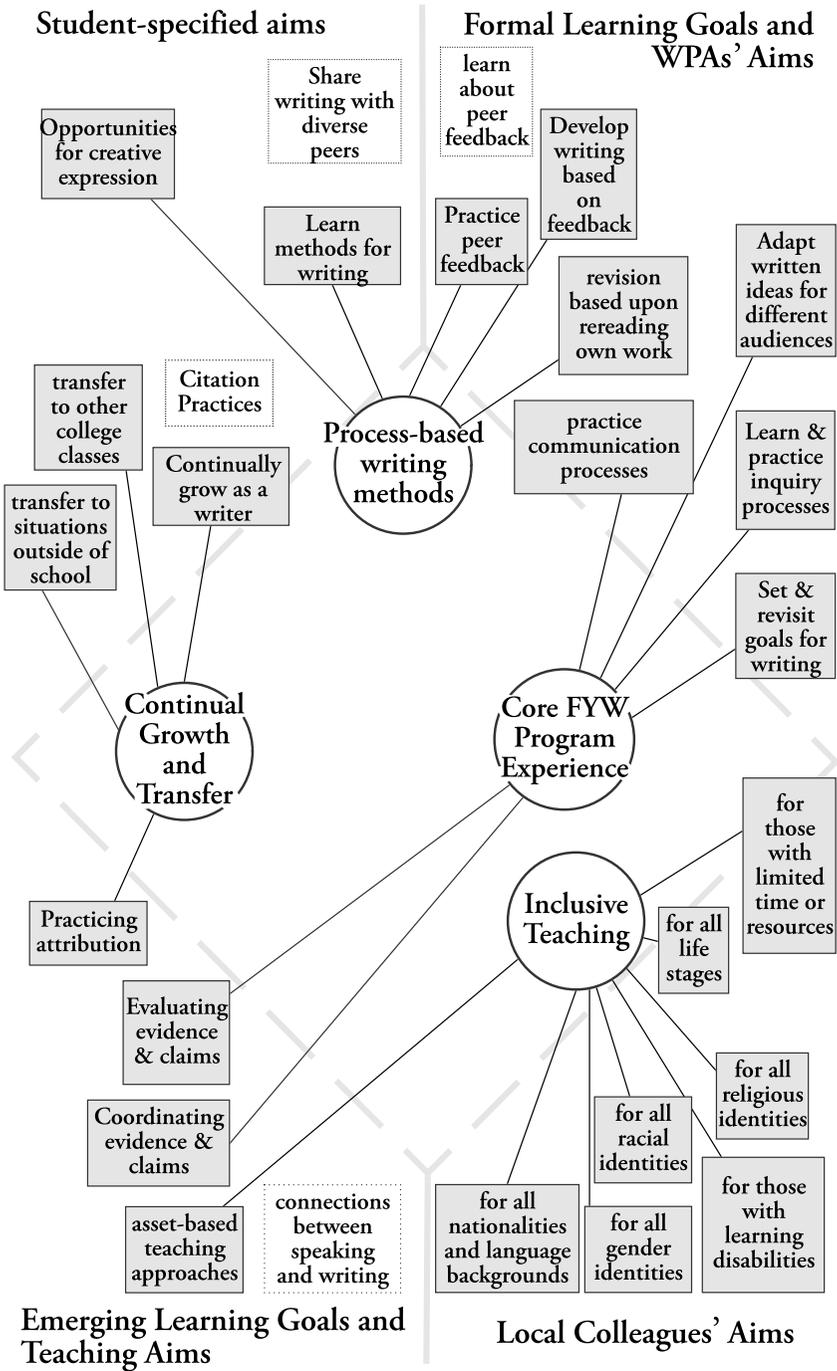
Student-specified aims

Formal Learning Goals and WPAs' Aims

Share writing with diverse peers

learn about peer feedback

Develop writing based on feedback

Opportunities for creative expression

Learn methods for writing

Practice peer feedback

revision based upon rereading own work

Adapt written ideas for different audiences

transfer to other college classes

Citation Practices

Continually grow as a writer

Process-based writing methods

practice communication processes

Learn & practice inquiry processes

transfer to situations outside of school

Set & revisit goals for writing

Continual Growth and Transfer

Core FYW Program Experience

Inclusive Teaching

for those with limited time or resources

for all life stages

Practicing attribution

Evaluating evidence & claims

for all religious identities

Coordinating evidence & claims

for all racial identities

for those with learning disabilities

asset-based teaching approaches

connections between speaking and writing

for all nationalities and language backgrounds

for all gender identities

Emerging Learning Goals and Teaching Aims

Local Colleagues' Aims

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-

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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**

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