Council of Writing Program Administrators
Consultant-Evaluator Service:
A Brief Overview

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Why do Writing Programs need WPA C–E visits?

- Get an informed outsider perspective about strengths and challenges of the program
- Assist a new WPA beginning a term of service and requesting an assessment of the current strengths and challenges of the program
- Advise a program/department/institution considering making a major change and seeking guidance
- Supplement periodic academic program or department reviews if they did not address the writing programs in detail
What time of year is best for a C–E visit?

- Anytime during the academic year when most students, teachers, and administrators are available to participate

- Any time when key personnel are available: WPA(s), upper level administrators, and others
What is the typical process and timeline for a visit?
(see sample timeline from Brady article—reference in last slide)

1. Consultation with C–E Service Co–Directors about Writing Program’s needs and goals for a visit

2. Request for and approval of funding from institution’s administration

3. Self–study process begins (or continues)

4. Several possible dates for a visit (usually Sunday afternoon through Tuesday noon) are identified: Be aware that Deans’, Provosts’, and Presidents’ calendars fill far in advance, so start by identifying their available dates and times

5. C–E Service Director selects team members for the visit based, in part, on relevant experience and availability within given date range

6. Co–Directors introduce team–members and program’s coordinator for the visit (typically the WPA); contact information is exchanged; confirmation of date for visit and clarification of procedures for C–Es’ travel, compensation, and reimbursement is reviewed
What is the typical process and timeline for a visit? (continued from previous slide)

7. Completion of general outline of visit schedule, typically in consultation with the C–Es

8. Completion of program Self-Study Report and delivery to C–E team; team contacts visit coordinator and/or self-study author with any questions and suggestions for revisions of visit schedule

9. Visit takes place

10. Exit interview in which preliminary recommendations are outlined

11. Team prepares and submits a written report of their findings and recommendations within four to six weeks of the visit

12. C–E Service conducts follow-up with team and writing program.
How are C–Es chosen for a visit?

- Teams are chosen from among a panel of 24 C–Es who have participated in C–E training; team is matched to program issues;

- Panel is constituted of rhetoric and composition scholars at a range of types of colleges and universities who have extensive experience as WPAs in one or more areas of writing program administration;

- Two–person teams are made up of panel members with diverse backgrounds and experiences. Panel members adhere to the Ethics Guidelines.
How does the Self-Study get written?

- *Who writes it?* Sometimes the WPA is the single author; sometimes the self study is a collaborative effort;

- *What information is included?* A Self-Study Guide is provided by the WPA C–E Service; some programs supplement with other relevant information or analyses, especially if they have unique questions or issues;

- *How is information gathered?* Sometimes writing programs have information already at hand; sometime they assemble information from available data; sometimes they collect data through interviews, surveys, or other forms of research.
What happens during a C–E visit?

- See Sample 48–hour schedule in Brady article, from C–Es’ arrival through departure

- Formal and informal meetings with
  - upper level administrators with oversight of the writing program (sometimes all the way up to college or university president)
  - one or more WPAs
  - teachers in the program
  - groups (committees) or individuals with responsibility for setting curriculum, policies, and practices
  - campus partners
  - students
What kind of report do the C–Es write?

- Report usually consists of both a statement of findings about the current situation, including recognition for program strengths, and a set of recommendations for changes.

- Areas of discussion typically align with information, issues, and concerns outlined in the Self–Study.

- Recommendations usually reference statements of professional guidelines and “best practices” and sometimes offer other successful writing programs as examples.
What are the outcomes of C–E visits?

- WPAs and other administrators use the report findings and recommendations to set directions for the program.

- C–E Service follows up one week, one month, and six months after visit to evaluate our processes and effectiveness and to offer additional consultation if needed.
What does the service cost?

- $4000 for honoraria for two consultant-evaluators ($2000 each);
- $250 administrative fee paid to the service to support costs of C–E training workshops and operating expenses (note: administrative fee for a visit conducted virtually when travel is not allowed is $450)
- Travel and lodging for two consultants*
- Meals for C–Es and sometimes for others meeting with the C–Es at meals*
  *does not apply for virtual visits when travel is not allowed
Related Publications

Resources

- Other Materials
  - Sample Timeline for planning (from Brady article)
    http://wpacouncil.org/aws/CWPA/asset_manager/get_file/377902?ver=19
  - Sample Schedule for visit (from Brady article)
    http://wpacouncil.org/aws/CWPA/asset_manager/get_file/377902?ver=19
  - Guidelines for Self-Study (link on WPA C–E Service webpage)
    http://wpacouncil.org/aws/CWPA/asset_manager/get_file/377905?ver=20
  - Sample Table of Contents for Self-Study (from Brady article)
    http://wpacouncil.org/aws/CWPA/asset_manager/get_file/377902?ver=19
Thanks

Questions? See https://associationdatabase.com/aws/CWPA/pt/sp/consulting-services or contact: shirley.rose@asu.edu and/or michaelp@georgiasouthern.edu

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