Architects of Change: Writing Enhanced Course Program Development and Core Reform

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WEC Program and Core Curriculum Overview

Co-Directors (Linda Anstendig and Eugene Richie, English Department)

The Pace University Writing Enhanced Course Pilot Program got underway in January 2001 at an auspicious moment. A supportive new Dean of the Dyson College of Arts and Sciences arrived in September 2000, and soon began a discussion of General Education Core reform. As a result, the development of our university-wide Writing Enhanced Course (WEC) Program paralleled the redesign of our Core, and many of the educational goals of our Program were incorporated into the new Core's underlying principles: effective writing and communication skills, critical thinking, problem-solving, analysis, technological competency, and information literacy.

As Martha Townsend suggests in her article "Writing Intensive Courses and WAC," the WI designation has "proved an effective means . . . for enhancing undergraduate . . . education, faculty development, and research. WI courses cannot be a complete response to any educational mission, but they can provide a significant contribution to an overall educational plan" (256). Likewise, Margaret Pobywajlo discovered at Plymouth State College that "writing intensive courses help to clarify institutional expectations about students' responsibility for their learning" (13). Our Writing Enhanced Course Program model provided a means for faculty to work as "architects of change" (Mcleod and Miraglia 4) as they became part of a larger cultural shift to promote active learning, student success, and faculty-student interaction through curriculum redesign.

According to Christine Farris and Raymond Smith, "...the way to keep writing tied to thinking and learning and to changes in teaching is to deal with it as locally and as discipline-and-professor-specifically as possible" (85). Our WEC Program has already begun to help students use their writing to better understand content in their courses and to improve their communication skills through guided revision of their writing, and we believe it will continue to improve students' communication skills and to infuse our new Core with greater coherence and intellectual rigor. The Program was a central ingredient of our General Education curriculum reform and our overall WAC Program (see our WAC homepage at http://webpage.pace.edu/lanstendig/wachome.html). As of September 2003, the WEC Program has become an integral part of our new Core curriculum for our University, which consists of a college of liberal arts and sciences and four professional schools in the areas of nursing, education, business, and computer science, with undergraduate campuses in Pleasantville, New York, and in New York City.

Certainly, dramatic institutional change in our writing curriculum has occurred since we began our WEC program. The new Core curriculum contains three newly designed writing courses:

- English 110—Composition: Critical Reading and Academic Writing
- English 120—Critical Writing
- English 201—Writing in the Disciplines

Some students take all three courses, but others place out of the first developmental course. In the sophomore or junior year, all students also take an upper-level writing and research course. In addition, the Core requires all students to take two WE courses as a supplement to their composition courses.

Students are also required by the new Core to take at least one thematic Learning Community, so we initially focused on developing WE courses in Core Learning Communities, which consist of paired or interdisciplinary courses. Also some of the learning community courses are content area courses that are linked with English 110, English 120, or English 201 However, we are also continuing to develop other Core WE courses as well as WE courses in students' majors, and we have made all literature courses WE, by working with English professors who teach them to provide adequate opportunities for feedback and revision for student writing about literature. To complement these writing initiatives, we have developed a new university-wide Writing Center (opened in fall 2003) with a tenure-track Director and full-time coordinators on our New York and Pleasantville campuses. The Center, too, has already begun to reach out to the faculty in WE courses and the Director is in the process of developing a Writing Fellows Program to go along with our newly designed tutor training course—English 302: Composition Theory and Practice.

Currently over 125 University courses have been designated as WE. The WEC criteria, application, list of current courses, and information about the Writing Center are available on the University home page (http://www.pace.edu) through the Core Curriculum link (see also our appendices, Writing Enhanced Course Criteria, Model Statement For WE Course Syllabus, and Application For Writing Enhanced Course Core Credit). Many professors have participated in our workshops and worked with our writing consultants, and others are volunteering to do so every semester. However, we have found that as we begin to institutionalize WEC we need to modify our original plans in order to meet the needs and expectations of faculty who are working within our own educational culture.

In the following discussion, we evaluate the Pilot Program model of our WEC Program and suggest the directions we plan to take now that the Program is firmly established within the Core curriculum. We offer the perspectives of the two co-directors, two writing consultants, and one participating professor who used extensive WE techniques in her computer programming course. We also highlight the need to continually review, assess, and revise the Program, especially the essential elements of the design of our WEC workshops and effective interaction between writing consultants and faculty teaching WE courses. We hope that our analysis of the initial successes and future challenges of our WEC Program will assist others who are beginning to develop such programs or who are struggling with ways to make their programs run more effectively, as well as those who want to make a writing-intensive-course initiative a key component in their Core reform.

Writing in the Disciplines: Program Development

Co-Directors (Linda Anstendig and Eugene Richie, English Department)

Our WAC Program began in 1996, when new Co-Directors from campuses in New York City and Pleasantville began leading workshops for a small group of faculty in disciplines from all five schools of the University. In 1997, with the assistance of funds from a National Endowment for the Humanities grant to Dyson College of Arts and Sciences, we developed a Writing and Technology Assistants Program (see our *academic.writing* research report at https://wac.colostate.edu/research/fullitem.cfm?itemID=2). In 1998, representatives from each of our five schools convened a Communications Roundtable. After an extended period of discussion and analysis of the role of writing in the educational goals of the University, the committee recommended designing and starting a Writing Enhanced Course Program. In January of 2001, we began our yearlong pilot, with the support of the University Deans Council and our Provost.

Criteria for WE Course: As Martha Townsend has noted in *WAC for the New Millennium*, "the more astute programmatic guidelines are couched in diplomatic language, allow for flexibility among disciplines, and account for individual instructor's teaching preferences" (235). To ensure acceptance of the Program, we defined the criteria for WE courses in terms of the institutional concern for disciplinary writing. Also to accommodate disciplinary perspectives and teaching preferences, we provided flexibility in the amounts and types of writing assignments and feedback (see the appendix, Writing Enhanced Course Criteria and Model Statement For WE Course Syllabus). We emphasized three areas: developing assignments that included criteria for writing, building in revision (with peer review and or instructor intervention), and using evaluation techniques and rubrics. Courses were capped at 30 and an average of 30-50% of the grade was to be based on writing evaluation.

These flexible criteria have been followed to a certain degree, except that it was difficult at first to get administrative agreement to cap class size. With the new Core Curriculum, Learning Communities were capped at 25 students, which was another key reason in our decision to focus on making as many of those courses WE as possible.Recently our Provost approved a cap of 25 students for any approved writing enhanced course. For any newly developed WE courses enrolling over thirty students, we plan to supplement the professor's writing-intensive efforts by using student writing consultants who have been trained in our Writing Center or in our tutor training course. Currently, all faculty wishing to teach a new WE course must review the criteria and fill out a WEC application (see the appendix, Application For Writing Enhanced Course Core Credit).

Writing Consultants: On each campus, our WEC pilot included two faculty writing consultants who worked closely with participating professors. We have been fortunate to enlist as writing consultants two full-time English professors with excellent writing expertise and two very experienced part-time English professors (there is a full-time and part-time faculty writing consultant on the New York and Pleasantville campuses). The full-time professors have received one course release time each semester, while the adjuncts have received a stipend of $1,250. We found that our initial guidelines for WEC professors and consultants needed to be flexible as well as more explicit, depending on the participating faculty member's particular needs and schedule, and we plan to revise these current guidelines in the near future (see the appendices, Guidelines For Dyson Writing Consultants and Guidelines For Professors Teaching Writing Enhanced Courses).

*WEC Workshops:*In addition to assigning writing consultants, during the Pilot Program period, to an average of 10-14 new WEC faculty each semester, we also conducted three two-hour workshops to help them develop assignments that include criteria for writing, build in revision (with peer review and / or instructor intervention), and create and effectively use evaluation techniques and rubrics (see the appendix, Summary of Writing Enhanced Course Pilot Program Workshops—Dec, 2000-May, 2001). These workshops shared best-practices to nurture critical thinking and active learning through the discourse of the discipline. In our Program design and in faculty development initiatives,

we took into account Linda Bergman's suggestion that "discourse differences reflect crucial differences in how we construct and transmit knowledge" (54) and that different disciplines often use specific writing techniques which professors in those disciplines are best able to demonstrate to their students. Through these workshops, we wanted to help WEC professors focus on how to improve students' communication skills and promote critical thinking and active learning in Core and major courses.

The first workshop, either face to face on each campus or as a video conference between campuses, was often held before the WEC semester began so that the writing consultants could work with professors to prepare the syllabus for the course. In a second workshop, usually in mid-semester, professors gave progress reports and demonstrated revision and evaluation strategies. A third workshop was offered in the pilot stage as a taped video-conference of the reports from each professor and writing consultant.

In an introductory workshop, we used an abbreviated edition of our *Guide to Writing and Technology Across the Curriculum* (see http://webpage.pace.edu/erichie/wacguide) and gave an overview of the Program. Professors brought their current syllabi to discuss and collect. We distributed the WEC Guidelines for Professors and reviewed materials on the principles of WAC. We helped professors formulate strategies for brief writing-to-learn assignments; criteria for writing assignments; techniques for revision and feedback (including peer review, checklists, and suggestions for treating common errors); strategies for evaluating student writing (including rubrics and grading standards); examples of ways to use on-line discussion forums; and criteria for evaluating and citing on-line sources (see examples of WEC materials in the appendix, Sample Newsletters).

In a second, or mid-semester workshop, professors described the WEC strategies they used in building their assignments, getting students to revise, and evaluating student writing. Some told us of their experiences with WebBoard and Blackboard as electronic writing components in their WEC classes. Directors and consultants collected materials from professors to use in our newsletters and to keep as part of course portfolios. These materials included copies of newly developed materials, such as course outlines, assignments with writing criteria, early and late drafts of student papers, peer-feedback revision forms, revision criteria sheets, and grading rubrics designed for specific assignments or for general use.

In the third or end-of-semester workshop, professors discussed which WEC strategies worked best in their courses, how students responded to being in a WEC course, and how we could improve the WEC Program in the future. Throughout the pilot-program period, there was a consensus among the participants that we should have writing standards across the curriculum and a university-wide WEC requirement.

The faculty writing consultants and these ongoing workshops helped WEC faculty integrate into their courses writing activities that facilitated students' learning of course content. We have continued to offer at least two workshops each semester introducing new professors to the Program as well as working in a hands-on way to adapt professors' syllabi and even specific assignments to include WEC criteria. To address similar WE issues, we will also give tailored workshops for professors in a single discipline, such as art, computer science, or education.

Case Study: A Writing Enhanced Computer Science Course

Shannon Young and Pauline Mosley

The following case study highlights the beneficial results of the collaboration between Shannon Young, a Program writing consultant, and Pauline Mosley, a Computer Science professor. Through

this collaboration and her participation in the WEC workshops, Professor Mosley was inspired to integrate a substantial amount of writing into her computer programming course. Guiding her efforts was the belief that if programmers wish to be effective designers, they must learn to write the materials and the documentation for their own programs. However, it was Professor Mosley's close collaboration with Professor Young that helped her determine ways to incorporate effective writing-enhanced strategies into her assignments (Co-Directors' note).

Writing to Learn and Learning to Write in Computer Science

Writing Consultant (Shannon Young, English Department)

My first semester I worked with professors from the departments of Speech, Education, Psychology, and Computer Science. The Computer Science assignment gave me the most pause. How would writing figure into a course that uses computer code instead of the alphabet? With this query in mind, I met with Pauline Mosley, the Computer Science faculty member, and explained some of the WEC objectives.

We discussed how the WEC strategies could be effectively implemented into her course so as to contribute to a greater mastery of content. I explained that I liked to think of writing as combing out a tangle. Until we write, the concept is in our heads in a state of vague disarray. Writing enables us to clarify our thoughts. Consequently, the writing process enhances learning, whatever the discipline.

Pauline told me that a central problem programmers face is how to make their programs comprehensible to others, in particular to those who will be using them. She wondered if she could have her students not only figure out how to program, but also how to explain their program in writing by putting together a technical manual. I thought this was a fantastic idea, especially because it would seamlessly incorporate the writing to learn process within the computer science course material, as well as help students begin to develop better writing skills for their future jobs. We proceeded to set up the project in stages that would lead the students to their final objective. We worked out a clearly worded assignment, a revision schedule, peer review sheets, and a grading checklist (see the appendices, Technical Manual Writing Assignment and Technical Manual Evaluation Form—Peer Review Checklist).

Pauline had a large class, thirty-five students, so I was especially concerned about the amount of time involved in giving revision suggestions to so many writers. We solved this by making the assignment a group project, five persons per group. Each group would work out its computer program and figure out how to translate the program into technical manual form. Also through the written comments embedded in the program itself, students briefly described aspects of the computer program they developed so that programmers who look at the code and comments could better understand the design. At each drafting stage the groups would spend class time looking over another group's manual in progress and give input about the comprehensibility of the material. Pauline also looked through each manual in each stage and provided students with feedback.

We discussed using informal writing to enable the students to thrash out questions and explore ideas. Pauline decided to utilize Blackboard so that each group member could interact with the other group members via the Internet, send out queries and discoveries, and make arrangements for meetings. A hand-written progress report was also presented by each group each week. Therefore, the writing component helped with organizing their work and strategizing about how best to complete their assignments.

At the end of the course, each group presented their programs to the class, together with the technical manuals that accompanied them. This project added an exhilarating dimension to her class and

writing out the concepts involved in computer programs enhanced her students' comprehension of the course material. In some cases grades were higher and the programs had fewer glitches than in past programs in other classes that did not use the approach of creating an accompanying user manual.

Within the WEC framework, writing tasks take on a completely different character. It's no longer a sink or swim situation where the student hands in a paper and receives a grade. Instead, writing becomes a collaborative process where the student feels the professor and other students are invested in his or her improving and succeeding. The WEC approach also involves a reorganization of the course material in such a way that less time is spent lecturing and more time is spent using interactive classroom strategies, such as group work and writing to learn objectives. The result is a more effective learning environment.

CS 122: Computer Programming II

WEC Program Professor (Pauline Mosley, Computer Science Department)

When my Dean and my Department Chair inquired about my interest in participating in the WEC Pilot Program and suggested that I work on making my CS 122: Computer Programming II a writing enhanced course, I was very skeptical. This second semester programming course requires students to design solutions for problem spaces, with several different frames of reference, and I wondered whether including writing would help or hinder these design objectives.

One of the factors that influenced my decision to work more with students' writing was the results of the 1998 study *What Business Wants from Higher Education*, by Diana Oblinger and Anne-Lee Verville. They found that employers are looking for employees who have technological versatility, critical-thinking ability, effective communication skills, and a cooperative attitude about team work. In prior semesters, I had concentrated mostly on strengthening students' critical thinking skills. However, I am always searching for new and innovative pedagogical strategies that present programming effectively. I also believed that programmers could best explain to others how to use their programs. So I decided to join the WEC Pilot Program. I wanted to see if using writing would help students create better programs as well as develop more effective communication skills—the two most important requirements for future professional employment. Thus began my journey of incorporating writing into CS 122.

My first challenge was to select writing assignments that would satisfy WEC criteria and also be meaningful to the students. I did not want to hear students say, "Professor Mosley, this is not an English class." Therefore, the assignments I chose had to be both relevant to the course and focused on improving students' technical writing skills. To design these assignments, I met with my writing consultant and attended WEC workshops in the Pilot Program. The best thing about the workshops was that all professors were able to share experiences about attempts to design the best writing assignments for our courses.

My writing consultant, Shannon Young, and I chose one informal and two formal writing assignments to add to the course. The informal writing assignment required each program design group to submit a weekly progress report. They also were required to use Blackboard to post questions and answers about the programming process and meeting announcements and reports. This use of technology promoted an active learning environment, enabling students to share ideas freely as well as fostering collaborative efforts between students. The two formal writing assignments consisted of a program design sheet with code and written comments and a technical manual or user's guide. In the programming assignment, students applied course concepts, performing all the steps necessary to

develop a working graphical user interface. Once they had completed these tasks, I believed my computer science majors could achieve a better understanding of problem solving, improve their technical writing skills, enhance their analytical ability, and develop their programming skills in a simulated workplace environment.

My next challenge was presenting the assignments to the class in a way that would motivate them to do the work. I felt that if the students understood the importance of writing and its pragmatic value they would make the effort to do the writing assignments well. So, I asked my class a significant question: "How many of you have tried to read a technical manual and couldn't follow the instructions?" Many of the students nodded their heads in agreement. Several told me their stories of frustration. I continued to talk about the importance of having good technical writing to accompany excellent programs. Then we discussed the assignment, which, in the context of an important job skill, was well received.

My writing consultant suggested that students be given a 'model' technical manual depicting good wording, spelling, punctuation, and clear directions about how to use a program. Since most of the students had little experience with this type of writing, she also suggested that the technical manual go through a series of revisions and a peer-review process before I graded the final product.

When the assignments were completed and graded, I found that the writing component complemented the course in significant ways:

- Students' programs were better structured and formulated than in past courses in which I had not emphasized writing.
- Their cognitive development was greater because through writing they made connections in the programs which they had not always seen before.
- The programs were more understandable and user friendly because of the user manual assignment.

Many professionals struggle with conveying technical concepts simply. I found that writing helps students of all learning styles and programming levels understand these concepts better. Regardless of how well or how poorly a student programs, the ability to communicate what one's program does and how to use it is a vital skill for all students. At the end of the course, one student enthusiastically told me, "Professor Mosley, I am going to take my technical manual with me on my job interview!" As a professor, I have also had a wonderful learning experience. Moreover, while my students were learning important programming concepts, they also began to develop the valuable employment skills of critical thinking, clear writing, and effective teamwork. In the future, I intend to continue to integrate writing into my courses.

WEC Program Challenges

Writing Consultant (Bette H. Kirschstein, English Department)

Professors succeed with the redesign of their courses because writing workshops and writing consultants guide them, but the collaborative process takes continuous effort from both the professor and the writing consultant. In the following section, another writing consultant presents her perspective on the challenges she faced working with a number of different professors as well as some of the issues that needed to be addressed while moving from a pilot stage to a university-wide program in our new Core curriculum (Co-Directors' note).

Working as a writing consultant in Pace's WEC Program over the last three years has been both rewarding and challenging. On the one hand, it has been highly satisfying to help my colleagues realize the power of writing as a tool for learning. They have enabled many of their students to synthesize course material better and to write more effective papers than in the past, which are two of the Program's major goals. However, Pace faculty teach four classes each term, and tend in general to work independently rather than collaboratively in the teaching arena. Therefore, our original conception of the role of the consultants has changed drastically. Rather than acting mainly as mentors for participating faculty and working with them on a regularly scheduled basis throughout the semester, consultants now have an expanded role in the Program as an ongoing resource for WEC faculty. The consultants continue to participate in workshops that introduce WEC theories and methods to faculty who are already enrolled in the Program for the following term; but they also recruit new participants by leading presentations at a variety of faculty institutes, orientations, and department meetings. They schedule more occasional one-to-one conferences or use phone calls and email with WEC faculty, and they will work on assessment materials for professors to use in the classroom and for the Program to evaluate its role in the new Core curriculum.

The WEC Program's original guidelines (see the appendices, [Guidelines for Dyson Writing Consultants](#) and [Guidelines for Professors Teaching Writing Enhanced Courses](#)) described the consultants as advisors to faculty, specifying that they were to meet with each professor at the start of each term and to meet regularly thereafter. At these meetings, the consultants were to review the syllabus, offer suggestions for integrating WEC strategies, and then over the course of the semester, guide the faculty member through the various steps: creating, presenting, and sequencing assignments; instituting paper revision processes; helping the professor to evaluate student writing so that both content and form were considered when assigning a grade; and visiting the professor's class to make a presentation on what constitutes effective writing and researching. It was even suggested that the professor's students could work with the consultants during their office hours.

But from the very start of the WEC Program, some participating faculty resisted working so closely with a colleague who was to act as a mentor and consult with them on a regular basis. Some faculty attended the introductory group meeting, took home the WEC materials we had distributed there, and then mainly went forward on their own.

The Business professor who was assigned to me when the pilot began provides a good example of this independent faculty approach to participation in the Program. After attending the introductory meeting at the start of the semester, he went home and completely revamped his class, "Contemporary Business Practices," in order to integrate more writing into it. He required his students to write, in stages, a twenty-five page report on a company, including an overview and analysis of the company's finances, marketing, and strategic plan. He mandated peer response sessions so students could receive feedback on their work and learn from each other's mistakes. He collected drafts of essays, made written comments, and then returned the papers for revision. When grading final versions of the students' papers, he used an assessment rubric that I had sent to him. He even had students practice answering essay questions and writing definitions before they took exams.

Although I was pleased that the Business professor had so completely absorbed WEC strategies and methods, and that he had so thoroughly revised his class, I felt left out of the process. Rather than consulting with me on a regular basis, he made all the changes in his approach based on his reading of the WEC materials that he had received at that first meeting or by mail from me. He rarely responded to my email and phone messages asking to meet, he never sent me his syllabus or any updates on his successes or problems, and we never met again until the end-of-term assessment

workshop, at which point we discovered what he had been doing during the semester. What, I wondered, had I done wrong?

I collaborated somewhat more extensively with two of the other professors assigned to me that first term. While the Education professor was not as eager to re-conceive her class as the Business professor was, she sent me her syllabus early in the semester and we discussed several possible changes and additions over the telephone. And although she did not attend another workshop after the first one (we had three that term), at the end of the semester she wrote that she had successfully implemented a substantial number of WEC strategies and was glad she had participated in the Program.

I had the most contact with the Criminal Justice professor, who attended all three of the WEC workshops and consulted with me twice in her office. We frequently passed each other on campus, so I received brief updates during the term. However, she was reluctant to show me her students' papers or to review some of them together. At the end of the semester, she said that my consulting with her had been very helpful, but I still wondered why she and the other participants had resisted meeting with me more regularly.

In the three ensuing semesters, during which I again had varying levels of contact with the participating faculty, it became clear that our original conception of the consultant's role did not fit the reality of what faculty participants in the WEC Program either wanted or needed. In the ideal world, all participants would have unlimited time to meet weekly or bi-weekly to consult with me. But at Pace, the heavy teaching load, plus the University's expectation that all faculty publish and do extensive service, simply leaves little, if any, inclination to take on extra time commitments. The actual implementation of WAC strategies in and of themselves is time-consuming, especially the first time professors use them. Thus, we realized, a few WEC workshops each semester are manageable; weekly or even bi-weekly meetings with a consultant are not.

Now I try to have initial meetings with professors who are new to the Program. I ask them to show me their syllabi and assignments, and I make several suggestions. I offer to make a presentation on writing to each class at some point, which I did for a History professor one term and which seems to have been helpful to her students. Rather than offering to meet students during my own office hours, I ask WEC professors to encourage their students to use the new Writing Center. I will be available to new and continuing professors when they need me. But I have come to recognize that because faculty are skilled professionals who can synthesize new pedagogical techniques quickly and effectively, they do not need a colleague constantly peering over their shoulders, checking on their progress. Thus, I now see and present myself as a resource for occasional consultation and materials rather than as a required weekly mentor.

Changing our vision of the WEC consultant model has made me feel content with my role in the Program and far more useful to it and my colleagues than I was in its early stages. My expectations of what faculty want from me and of how I can help them are more realistic, and I no longer have the vague sense that I am failing them. I believe passionately in WEC and am therefore an enthusiastic and, I believe, effective recruiter of new faculty. Moreover, my expanded and redefined role as a recruiter, presenter, and resource for conferences and materials has allowed me to appreciate anew the ways in which WEC is enriching the intellectual life of both Pace faculty and students.

WEC Program Assessment

Co-Directors (Linda Anstendig and Eugene Richie, English Department)

As our case study and consultants clearly indicate, the flexible connections between individual professors and consultants, the successful work of professors and students, and the ongoing faculty development workshops are the key ingredients of the Program. Therefore, from the very beginning we were concerned about measuring the results of those efforts. During the Pilot Program period, to track our progress and to elicit student and professor responses to the Program, we used three methods: a university-wide newsletter with evaluative comments by current WEC professors and consultants (see the appendix, Sample Newsletters); an end-of semester taped videoconference workshop with all participants, consultants, and directors from both campuses; and pre and post professor and student surveys for all new WE courses.

See the appendices, Writing Enhanced Course Pilot Program—Professor Survey I, Writing Enhanced Course Pilot Program—Professor Survey II, Writing Enhanced Course Pilot Program—Student Survey I, Writing Enhanced Course Pilot Program—Student Survey II.

To streamline our student survey assessment and to make it more comprehensive as well, we have currently revised our student survey process and use only one end-of-term evaluation for all students in new or continuing WE courses (see the appendix, Survey of Writing Enhanced Courses: Students [Revised-Fall 2003]).

A comparison of the students' pre and post-course surveys in the WEC Pilot Program indicated the following common attitudes about writing in their disciplines:

- Students had earned confidence in writing, and had a consistent desire to improve their writing skills from the outset of the course.
- They generally agreed that getting feedback from others on writing was a positive and beneficial experience.
- They agreed that it is important to write about course material in order to learn it better and understand it.
- They felt they would need to write well in their careers.
- Most wanted to use multi-media writing software such as PowerPoint, Lotus Notes, Web pages, or audio-visual recordings for their communications projects in their own disciplines.

In the newsletter reports, the assessment videoconferences, and the professors' surveys in the WEC Pilot Program, we noted some common threads:

- Professors generally felt they had integrated more writing more effectively into the courses they were teaching.
- They had made better and clearer assignments, rather than relying on essay-question prompts.
- They thought better first drafts resulted from these more fully developed assignments and from the use of brief heuristic writing activities.
- They believed that students' revisions of their work, either with the help of instructor intervention or peer group response, also resulted in better final projects.
- Assignment-specific rubrics eased the final evaluation process somewhat by providing ways to make similar comments about writing and content and also give a final grade that the student would better understand.

- In many cases, the professors were using models of students' papers, revision handouts, or evaluation rubrics for the first time or at least more often than before participating in the Program.

These student and professor survey results support the findings of Richard Light at Harvard University. His research has demonstrated that "no factor was more important to engagement and good grades than the amount of writing a student did" and the kind of feedback they received on the writing (Zernike 18).

Conclusions and Future Directions

Co-Directors (Linda Anstendig and Eugene Richie, English Department)

As our two and one-half year Pilot Program was ending, our Core Revision Task Force unanimously voted to adopt the WEC Program pilot model, including the criteria and the use of writing consultants. For the WEC Program, with our new university Writing Center, we have now set up an all-campus Writing Advisory Board, using the model described by Martha Townsend, to review policies, evaluate procedures for vetting WE courses, and pursue a more extensive assessment process (246).

We have learned a great deal during the first years of our WEC Program, especially about the need for realistic expectations. It is difficult for faculty, who are used to operating independently, to embrace a collaborative model. However, we have seen the results achieved by the Professor Pauline Mosley, who has transformed her Computer Science curriculum, changed her pedagogy, and augmented her research interests. Another professor, attending her last workshop, exclaimed. "I love teaching this way. I could never not do WAC. It's so much fun." On the other hand, it's difficult for professors to make time in their busy schedules to meet with a consultant. WAC provides the possibility that students will learn more course content and will become better writers, but that is simply not enough incentive for professors to participate as fully as we would like them to. So we have continued to reach out in many different ways by providing consultations and materials for current professors.

We have had continuing support from the University administration as well as additional funding from our Dyson NEH grant. In our Pilot Program period, through NEH funds, each professor received $200 for attending workshops and working with a writing consultant to develop a WE course. Recently, our Dyson College Associate Dean for Academic Programs and Services, who was also the Chair of the Core Curriculum Task Force, received approval for a $300 stipend each semester for any full or part-time faculty member who has completed the WE workshop training and is continuing to teach a WE course. Also each new professor participating in the workshop training will now receive one credit of release time to act as a mentor for other professors entering the Program or will be paid one credit of overage for that semester.

We have also received a Pace Presidential Learning Assessment Grant, for the new Core Task Force Sub-Committee on Assessment to design and begin to implement an assessment plan to measure the effectiveness of faculty development and student learning and the persistence of students taking the new Core. We are, as well, planning to apply for an NEH Focus grant to assess and strengthen the new writing course sequence and the WE courses offered in the Core. This project would focus on ways to increase incentives, improve faculty development, and integrate the new Writing Center more fully into these courses. Also in the near future, we will be applying for a University presidential grant to assess teaching and learning results in the WEC Program, i.e., attitudinal changes, the effect of active

learning techniques on the comprehension of course content, and changes in the type or quality of writing in WEC courses.

With the convergence of our WEC Program and general education reform, we have a tremendous opportunity to help foster "the actual transformative possibilities WAC offers" (McLeod and Maimon 578). As Margaret Pobywajlo has suggested, general education programs and WAC have much in common in reforming pedagogy and adding "rigor and depth" to Core courses (13). With the needed "academic and financial support, WAC programs that include writing intensive courses have the potential to infuse the general education curriculum with the momentum to integrate, rather than fragment students' academic experiences" (Pobywajlo 18). Our WEC pilot has ended, but like Barbara Walvoord, et. al., we are involved with WAC " in the long run." It's over time and with "a network of ongoing support," to build community and offer constant encouragement, that faculty and students can most benefit (140).

Appendices

1. Application for Writing Enhanced Course Core Credit
2. Guidelines for Dyson Writing Consultants
3. Guidelines for Professors Teaching Writing Enhanced Courses
4. Sample Newsletters
5. Summary of Writing Enhanced Course Pilot Program Workshops—Dec, 2000-May, 2001
6. Survey of Writing Enhanced Courses: Students [Revised-Fall 2003]
7. Technical Manual Writing Assignment
8. Technical Manual Evaluation Form—Peer Review Checklist
9. Writing Enhanced Course Pilot Program—Professor Survey I
10. Writing Enhanced Course Pilot Program—Professor Survey II
11. Writing Enhanced Course Pilot Program—Student Survey I
12. Writing Enhanced Course Pilot Program—Student Survey II
13. Writing Enhanced Course Criteria and Model Statement For WE Course Syllabus

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