

# NOTES FROM THE NATIONAL TESTING NETWORK IN WRITING



A Project of The City University of New York and The Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education

The National Testing Network in Writing is now six years old, and it has accomplished many things in its brief life. Thanks to you--the 2,100 members of this network--NTNW has become the largest national clearinghouse of information and data on postsecondary writing assessment. No longer do faculty and administrators have to reinvent the wheel at their schools. Now they call us and attend our conferences in order to examine tests, review data, and exchange ideas. And *NTNW Notes* have become valuable resources for practitioners and scholars. Quotes from these newsletters have begun appearing regularly in our profession's journals and books. Finally, the NTNW book, *Writing Assessment: Issues and Strategies*, is fast becoming one of the most important reference works in the field.

In addition, institutions continue to compete to cosponsor our annual conferences. We are currently planning the 1988 conference, which is being cosponsored by The University of Minnesota. It will take place Friday through Sunday, April 15, 16, and 17 at the Radisson University Hotel in Minneapolis. (See the centerfold of this issue for more information about the conference.) And we hope to make 1989 an international year: we are talking with Dawson College in Quebec about the seventh conference.

This issue of *Notes* continues the tradition of publishing abstracts from the annual conferences. The 1987 conference was held in Atlantic City and cosponsored by the New

Jersey Department of Higher Education. It generated much controversy and debate, and we are sure that the ideas and problems discussed at the conference will be of interest to you. The abstracts in this issue are grouped according to themes. The first explores the question of the nature of writing proficiency and the second analyzes the components of a valid writing assessment program. The next group of seven focuses on models of writing assessment. These are followed by three abstracts that examine the impact of writing assessment on students and faculty. Next are three that focus on evaluating writing across the curriculum, two that explore issues in program evaluation, and one that examines writing assessment in China. The final three examine current research on writing assessment.

The theme of the upcoming 1988 conference is "Future Directions in Writing Assessment," and it is clear from the presenters with whom we have already spoken that the future direction--indeed, the very future of writing assessment--seems linked to our ability to make our tests and testing procedures relate more closely to our classroom writing assignments, curricula, and pedagogy. Come join us in Minneapolis to find out more about the connections between teaching and testing writing. See you in April.

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*Editors*

We wish to thank the people who graciously contributed their time and energy to this issue of *Notes*. First, we thank all of the Recorders whose summary reports make up the bulk of the issue. We also thank Anthony Lutkus and Mary Ellen Byrne of the New Jersey Department of Higher Education for putting together such a terrific conference. Special thanks goes to Mary Carney for her invaluable assistance in the production of *Notes*, our first to be designed and typeset on the computer. Finally, we thank Harvey Wiener, the new Director of CUNY's Instructional Resource Center, for continuing to support the production of NTNW's newsletter.