Journal of Basic Writing

Accelerated Learning Programs Special Issue #2
Moving Forward: Rethinking ALP Structures and Faculty
Development

The Corequisite Landscape and Envisioning Beyond the
Horizon
**Leah Anderst, Cheryl Comeau-Kirschner, Jennifer
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JBW

Journal of Basic Writing

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Journal of Basic Writing

Accelerated Learning Programs Special Issue #2 (of 2)
Moving Forward: Rethinking ALP Structures and Faculty Development

CALL FOR ARTICLES

We seek manuscripts that are original, stimulating, well-grounded in theory, and clearly related to the complexities of providing writing support across contexts. All manuscripts must focus on basic writing and/or must situate settings of instruction or institutional agency in explicit relation to basic writing concerns. A familiarity with the journal and its readership should be evident through an introduction that engages with recent and ongoing debates, open questions, and controversies in and around basic writing.

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Endnotes should be kept to a minimum. It is the author's responsibility to obtain written permission for excerpts from student writing, especially as this entails IRB review, which should be made transparent in an endnote for readers.

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EDITORS' COLUMN

The Corequisite Landscape and Envisioning Beyond the Horizon

This second installment of a two-part special issue of the *Journal of Basic Writing* continues to focus on accelerated developmental learning and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Here we feature articles sharing ways that English departments, writing programs, faculty cohorts, and individual instructors have responded to and facilitated pedagogical shifts during this period of unprecedented global upheaval. As the articles and reflections in *JBW* 43.1 reveal, faculty at open-access institutions, and especially those teaching students in need of developmental coursework, faced heavy increases to already full workloads during the pandemic lockdowns. In particular, the emotional support sought by students, colleagues, friends, and family far outpaced what many of us could feasibly provide during the global crisis. And for some such increased emotional labor and the shift to remote instruction arrived in tandem with changes to developmental curricula. Amidst a growing national push to shift to the accelerated learning program or a corequisite model of developmental education, and coinciding with a prolonged pandemic, the contributors featured in this second installment show how they and their colleagues have adapted or re-adapted the accelerated model to best suit the needs of their local community, their instructors and their students.

For some years now, many open-access institutions have been shifting developmental coursework from a primarily prerequisite, multi-semester framework to a corequisite model that integrates reading and writing instruction and connects a one-semester developmental course to a credit-bearing college composition course. Students who would have had to take one or two (or more) semesters' worth of "remedial" reading or writing before being allowed to enroll in freshman composition can now enroll in the credit-bearing course in their first semester while also taking a corequisite support course. Research conducted and published by instructional faculty, by outside researchers, and by non-profit funders demonstrates the greater effectiveness of corequisite instruction over and above "traditional" remediation, or the prerequisite model.

Two recent reports make these conclusions clear. Complete College America's 2021 report, "No Room for Doubt: Moving Corequisite Support from Idea to Imperative," highlights data from university systems in Georgia,

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New York, and West Virginia to confirm the effectiveness of corequisites courses for increasing graduation and retention rates and provides recommendations for adopting and scaling corequisite instruction. Furthermore, in "National Report on Developmental Education: Corequisite Reform Is Working," composition scholars Patrick Sullivan and Peter Adams provide an overview of pass rate data from community colleges across the United States. As these and other studies show, corequisite courses allow more students from all backgrounds, especially students of color, to enroll in and earn transferable writing credits within their first semester of college rather than hold them back in remedial courses where the vast majority "stop-out" before they take any credit-bearing writing course. Acceleration, then, provides many students with access to credit-bearing courses, and it helps to reduce the high levels of attrition associated with prerequisite developmental course work.

The mid- to late-2010s saw important movements to expand corequisite developmental education across many community colleges and open-access institutions in the United States. Interested faculty, administrators, and independent researchers took note of the successes reported by Peter Adams and his colleagues at Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC), and their Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) began slowly spreading and expanding to other colleges. State legislatures also weighed in, and in their report cited above, Sullivan and Adams outline the various state mandates that have required public colleges and universities in the US to shift their developmental coursework away from a prerequisite model and to a primarily corequisite model in reading, writing, and math. They identify eleven states that have enacted this shift through legislative measures, and they include the year of each state mandate's passage: Connecticut (2012), Florida (2013), Tennessee (2013), Indiana (2013), West Virginia (2013), Georgia (2015), Texas (2017), California (2017), Nevada (2019), Colorado (2019), and Louisiana (2022). In these states, local governments, persuaded by research that reveals important flaws in traditional remediation, held colleges to sometimes strict and quick timelines in order to enact curricular changes.

As this timeline demonstrates, for some states and many colleges in them, the corequisite model has been in place for a number of years before the COVID-19 pandemic. For others, these curricular changes were just beginning or were in their infancy when the pandemic forced us inside our homes, in front of our computer screens, teaching students whose faces we no longer saw and whose voices we rarely heard. This was the case in Nevada (2019), Colorado (2019), Louisiana (2022); and in some colleges within CUNY and SUNY, the large public systems in New York. These instructors

and their students in these places struggled to teach and to learn critical reading, writing, and thinking, both in the newly developed corequisite courses and in "mainstream" writing courses in an almost entirely remote teaching environment.

Still, the pandemic has not appeared to halt or slow reforms that had already begun or were planned within writing programs. Faculty across the country continued to make the shift to accelerated learning, to adapt their pedagogy to a new model, to support colleagues and students, and to assess the success of these new courses. The strongest advocates for corequisite learning continue to push forward. As the authors of the 2021 Complete College America report write of the speed of this reform movement across American colleges, "frankly, it isn't happening quickly enough. If our goal is to ensure every student succeeds, the corequisite model needs to become the rule, not the exception" (15). If, however, there are hurdles along the way toward accelerated learning and away from traditional remediation, perhaps the biggest for reading and writing instruction is the heterogeneity of English departments and writing programs across the country's many and distinct two-year colleges.

In his recent essay, "Is There a 'Good' Writing Program in This Two-Year College? Thirty-Plus Years of Scholarship," Jeffrey Klausman explains one of the major challenges to researching writing instruction in two-year institutions: there is not and has not been one clear picture of what writing programs look like across these schools. While most four-year college English departments have dedicated Writing Program Administrators who, often with an assistant program administrator, schedule classes, set pedagogy requirements, offer training and support for instructors, and run yearly assessments, the same is not always true of two-year colleges.

Klausman begins by reviewing research shared by Helen Howelle Raines in her 1990 essay "Is There a Writing Program in This Two-Year College." Hoping to learn about these programs of instruction, Raines, Klausman writes, "set to work":

> She made phone calls, conducted interviews, and then developed and sent a survey, all to find out what two-year college writing programs looked like. She received 236 responses to her survey, which she analyzed, and in the most famous line from that article, she offers her confession: "Even though I began with no hypothesis to prove, I did hope to find a pattern, to see some model of community-college writing programs emerge. None did. In fact, as I interpret

the situation, two-year schools are, in many respects, as different from one another as they are alike." (401)

Raines's work from 1990 was later recreated by Tim N. Taylor who, as Klausman explains, found that little had changed: "what Taylor found from the 21 responses mirrored what Raines had found seventeen years earlier. . . Taylor says, in his follow-up article published in 2009, 'In writing programs at community colleges, sharing responsibility and respecting instructor autonomy is key' (130)" (402). So, to the modified question, "is there a standard writing program in two-year colleges?" we can most certainly say: No.

We summarize and quote from Klausman's important article at length here because his analysis shows an important disconnect we see in the ways some reform efforts are progressing. On the one hand, there is a push to uniformly restructure developmental reading and writing pedagogy across the nation's many access-oriented colleges; and on the other hand, there are numerous institutions that lack similarly structured or administered writing programs. Even our own two colleges, Queensborough Community College (QCC) and Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC), which are both within the CUNY system, operate quite differently from one another and even more differently now than they each did five or ten years ago. An accelerated learning model devised for and successful at one college, then, may not have the same fit and impact at another college.

Since two-year colleges and many four-year colleges across the United States have long offered developmental coursework, shifting from a prerequisite to a corequisite model requires careful consideration of the needs of each institution's local faculty groups and student populations. As Weaver, Hall and Glaessgen recently reported here in *JBW*, students enrolled in basic writing courses at their university system in Missouri often favor a "traditional" basic writing model. Through qualitative research they found that "a significant number of our students prefer a prerequisite model of writing instruction that affords them more time to work on their writing in a low-risk environment" (79). Weaver et al. show, then, that "[e]ven among 4-year institutions, the needs of Basic Writing students will vary" (79).

What we hope to show with the articles and reflections in this issue is that while one model of corequisite support for reading and writing remediation, CCBC's Accelerated Learning Program, may be the most highly publicized and perhaps, the most frequently adopted, other forms of instruction and other methods that take greater consideration of local contexts and student populations can fall within the bounds of corequisite support

and provide similarly promising results for students. Open access colleges, their writing programs and English departments can shape or adjust this model to best serve the students in their local communities. As the writers of this issue demonstrate, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic created opportunities to incorporate and develop additional reforms to placement, to pedagogy, and to professional development and collaboration. Out of necessity, many writing programs abandoned using standardized testing for more holistic or self-directed placement procedures. Writing program administrators created innovative virtual spaces for collaboration and professional development. Writing faculty redesigned curricula, implemented new pedagogical approaches, and integrated more student support across online and hybrid modalities. While many of our actions stemmed from a sense of urgency in unprecedented times, much of what we did and what the writers in this issue describe in their essays, drew on best practices and innovative approaches in writing studies. The contributors in this issue reflect upon some of these reforms and analyze the lasting effects they have had on their writing programs.

In the first article, "Responding to Disruption with Feminist Hospitality," Tara Knight and Sarah Stanley describe what they call a "Hub" model in the Freshman Writing Program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. These "hubs" consist of students enrolled in multiple different writing courses taught by a team of instructors who work from a shared curriculum and offer shared office hours and support for students. As they describe, the Hub structure provided space for important collaboration and support between colleagues as well as between students and faculty members. And, they explain, "In contrast to the supplementary support course model, like AWPs [Accelerated Writing Programs], the Hub instead focuses on facilitating student connections and belonging within the FYC course structure" (15). Knight and Stanley provide a view into one program's unique adoption of two key ideas undergirding the Accelerated Learning model: hospitality to students within the life and identity of the college, and enhanced support and community within the spaces of teaching and learning. They conclude with positive student success data and write, "The correlation between Hub teachers' increased capacity to support their students and the Hub cohort's higher pass rate in FYC [freshman year composition] suggests that it might be possible to accelerate students in a FYC classroom that provides students with additional support through team-teaching *rather than* requiring AWP students to take an additional course" (25).

Joanne Baird Giordano and Cassandra Phillips also describe their ad-

aptation to an accelerated model in their article, "Adapting Writing Studio Pedagogy for Flexible and Equitable Acceleration." Referring specifically to the legislative paths that characterize many schools' adoption of a corequisite model, they write, "These mandates can be austerity measures masquerading as social justice work, especially when they are imposed on literacy programs and English Departments without input from faculty or an understanding of the locally situated needs of a program and the students it serves" (34). Giordano and Phillips propose a studio model as "a promising approach to corequisite support," which, they write, "provides a pathway for faculty to center their teaching on responding to locally situated student needs" (34). They describe the writing studio as offering faculty a way to provide increased flexibility, support, and equity for students in the face of mandated curricular reforms. The article provides a thorough overview of the writing studio model, including its long history in practice and in writing pedagogy research, and they take readers through their own work on a multi-campus move to a studio model in Wisconsin community colleges.

For the authors of our final article, Ian Golding, Sonja Andrus, Kevin Oberlin, Brenda Refaei, and Anna Hensley, the COVID-19 pandemic brought them the perhaps surprising opportunity to create and implement a guided self placement (GSP) system for writing courses at the University of Cincinnati Blue Ash College (UCBA). Their article, "Crisis as a Catalyst for Change: Supporting Student Success with GSP and ALP During the Pandemic," shares the many details related to how they and colleagues across their university system advocated for, created, and implemented an online GSP for students. Rolling out their GSP, the college then saw an increase in enrollment in the ALP courses which they had recently begun piloting. As they show, "GSP supports students in selecting a writing course that will extend their writing skills based on where they are right now, as they begin their educational journey, while the ALP course gives students the opportunity to complete a college level course when they might not otherwise attempt it without the additional support available" (74).

We conclude this special issue with a reflective article by Tara Coleman and Jacqueline Jones titled "Rebooting ALP." At their school, Laguardia Community College (CUNY), accelerated course work has been available to students since 2011, many years prior to the pandemic. Coleman and Jones describe the strong culture of professional development in their department, and how they relied on this culture to create a "reboot" seminar for ALP faculty during and following the COVID-19 pandemic. This work allowed them to understand that a post-pandemic era does not necessarily equal "returning

to a period of stability" (80). "ALP teaching," they explain, " appears likely to require frequent adaptation and flexibility for the foreseeable future" (80).

Though the COVID-19 pandemic has recently been downgraded to an endemic by the CDC, the effects of that era remain with us even if we have settled into a new normal. Many of the strategies we all shifted to so quickly and often without knowing exactly what we were doing, remain with us. It is our hope that the articles and reflection in this special issue help us to begin to untangle the threads of developmental education reform during a global pandemic. Each piece demonstrates an example of creative and careful response to the upheavals of the pandemic years, balancing a consideration of local needs with disciplinary knowledge. Each reveals lasting and positive changes we can make to corequisite writing programs as they continue to become a dominant model in the field of basic writing.

—**Leah Anderst, Cheryl Comeau-Kirschner, Jennifer Maloy**, guest editors, JBW Special Issue on ALP Vol. 2: Moving Forward: Rethinking ALP Structures and Faculty Development

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Responding to Disruption with Feminist Hospitality

Tara Knight and Sarah Stanley

ABSTRACT: *This article explores the connection between disruption and hospitality in accelerated writing programs (AWPs), tracing their association to the 1992 Conference on Basic Writing when AWPs were first conceived. Similar to the programmatic disruption AWPs posed to BW, the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted traditional teaching approaches and placement practices, inviting teachers to experiment and eliciting their hospitality in a time of hardship and unintended student acceleration due to placement changes. In the context of a small public state university in the far north, Sarah, the Director of University Writing, was already experimenting with programmatic structure to address the unsustainable labor and graduate teaching training patterns she had previously noticed through a pilot she called the "Hub," a FYC model that uses team teaching, labor-based grading contracts, and open educational resources. After a previously failed iteration of the Hub, the authors highlight how they embraced a feminist, disruptive hospitality that encouraged collaboration and decentralized teaching models. The article offers insights into future hospitable possibilities, emphasizing the importance of attention to material conditions and collaborative resourcing.*

KEYWORDS: *belonging; disruption; first-year writing; hospitality; team teaching*

Subject: Fall 2021 and beyond: Do you see yourself teaching 111X for UAF online? Invitation to collaborate

Sarah Stanley   to Jody, Jaclyn, Tara, Zoe, Kendalyn, Kendell, Megan

Hi, there,

   Are you at all craving a more supportive community when it comes to teaching online during the pandemic and perhaps (dare I write…) post?

   I'm committed to using resources differently. I don't want to add time to your balancing act between teaching and your other responsibilities. I want to ensure the best possible learning

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Tara Knight *is a second-year PhD student at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, who worked for several years in higher education as an adjunct writing instructor, admissions counselor, and academic advisor before returning to graduate school. This is her first academic publication. As a teacher-scholar, she is interested in anti-racist teaching approaches, assessment, and cultural rhetorics pedagogies.*

Sarah Stanley *is Associate Professor of English and the Director of University Writing at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Her teacher research scholarship learning from student writing in sentence workshops has been previously published in* JBW. *Her current writing project is a collaborative article on the Writing Hub as a hybrid learning space for students and teachers with Elle Fournier and Zeke Shomler.*

experience for our UAF writers, no matter if they experience 111X online or in a face-to-face classroom.

The big idea is that teachers work in team-based sections called "hubs." A hub is 60 students. Students maybe asynchronous online or/and signed up for more traditional classrooms taught on campus. Each hub has three teachers. Did you catch that the student-teacher ratio has just been lowered? (it's a HUGE incentive I think)

Some ideas I have include:
- All teachers committing to expert level feedback weekly to all students in a hub section
- Shared office hours
- A networked curriculum (open-source; no textbooks!)
- A labor-based value system

Each teaching team would, of course, be able to make adaptations but generally, the curriculum is the same. And, we would also need to agree to move toward an un-grading/or labor-based value system too.

The collaborative work involves networking assignments, the benefit being that writers are exposed to a more diverse audience. Teachers would be ready to support another teacher at any time that needs it bc life got hard, a child or you got sick, etc. We can provide this community support because we are working together.

What do you think? At this point, I want to know if you would be interested in pursuing the idea. I want to be ready in the fall with an adaptive system. Happy to discuss too. I didn't clear this with the department chair because I think it should just start here—with us—a group of like-minded badass writing teachers.

Thanks for reading, and hope you are well, Sarah

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Tara Knight   to Sarah
Hi Sarah,
Thanks for your email. I love the idea of collaborating with a community of teachers. Count me in.
Best,Tara

_
Subject: Still Interested?
Sarah Stanley   to Tara
Let me know! Could use the help—
Sent from Gmail Mobile

_
Tara Knight   to Sarah
Hi Sarah,
Sorry I didn't get back to you sooner. Yes, I can help with the WRTG F111X hub this fall. What do I need to do to get started?
Best, Tara

Figure 1. An email exchange about the 2021 Hub.

The initial email invitation, excerpted above, arrived on April 30, 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic's second spring, a season in Alaska when snow melt is gradual, skies are gray, and the sun sets after 10pm. By then, most Alaskans are past plotting their garden and, depending on where they live, may be setting seed starts outside to adapt to the sunlight gradually. Perhaps a few of the message recipients were in the midst of organizing small social

gatherings; after about one year of isolation and quarantines, vaccines were available to adults. The spring semester was concluding, and the beginning of a new normal and summer fun were on people's minds.

Sarah's email put all that April anticipation to the side, asking instead for more collaboration, to continue thinking differently about teaching writing, and promoting the idea that a community of teachers could improve conditions for students and teachers alike. This experimental structure was known around the department as "the Hub." The "Hub" is a metaphor for the course design, wherein the spokes (multiple writing sections and campus resources) feed into hub (hybrid teaching and learning environments). She asked these teachers for a willingness to be disrupted in their priorities at work, including how they thought of instructional time with students and their relationships to a writing curriculum, their authority, and their personal boundaries. Sarah posed to these teachers this disruption without engulfing the differences between their institutional positions (Barrett; Bay; Bennett). Nonetheless, a hierarchical difference is present: Sarah is the writing program administrator (WPA), and each recipient is a past graduate student, all of whom were supervised by Sarah at one point. Sarah reifies the disruptive, isolating context of pandemic era teaching in her opening, as she invites negotiation on how these contracted writing teachers relate to their work. Importantly, since Sarah's responsibility is to train new graduate student teachers, her invitation is also an opportunity for the recipients to influence and support the current program.

By August, a couple of months later, the message had received some enthusiastic response, but most of the teachers did not have the capacity to work with the idea at that time. Tara Knight, working as an academic advisor and adjunct writing instructor, was the only instructor able to engage more fully. Responding to both the April and August messages, Tara demonstrated a willingness to experiment and embrace a disruptive and still developing idea—a disposition we will argue we need more of in accelerated writing program (AWP) and first-year composition (FYC) program development post pandemic life. Tara's unique position in the institution and her welcoming, "count me in" willingness to experiment with programmatic structure immediately sparked praxis at multiple levels. Tara's reply and our subsequent dialogue helped bring about: scaling labor-based grading commitments and quality feedback for student writing, working together in an empowering networked curriculum, providing tiered mentoring for new graduate students, increasing exchange between student affairs and writing faculty,

and, given the generous willingness to collaborate, a renewed commitment on Sarah's part to be vigilant toward recognizing the efforts of all involved.

We choose to open with our email exchanges because they took place in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, and while Sarah's email invitation builds from a pre-pandemic, strategic foundation, the response from Tara enacts a feminist hospitality that allowed for growth in a disruptive time. In our contribution to this special issue, we connect the disruption of a world-wide pandemic with ongoing opportunities for hospitality in university writing programs. We trace hospitality to the origins of accelerated learning and provide a data-driven story about a commitment to hospitality across the pandemic experience from our institutional context––that is, how the more hospitable placement changes caused by the pandemic unintentionally mainstreamed a significant population of students at our institution into regular FYC courses and how pre-pandemic disruptions to course structure were exacerbated by pandemic learning conditions affecting delivery modes. Ultimately, however, our commitment to hospitality widened the gate and increased student success. This story offers readers a chance to reflect on: 1) the challenge of hospitality given its inviting but threatening nature because it requires such openness and 2) the possibility of hospitality given how it becomes established and maintained in practice. Considering our results, we end the article by evoking an image of a messy entranceway rather than a "tidy house" of basic writing. We share this story to highlight the possibilities of hospitality that are readily available to WPAs and writing programs, invitations that can lead to accelerated learning for more students while also providing support to instructors.

ACCELERATION AS DISRUPTION: WIDENING THE GATE FURTHER

Acceleration as a disruptive model to basic writing and as an opportunity for hospitality can be traced back to AWP's origins; coming to the idea separately, David Bartholomae and Peter Adams first proposed mainstreaming students who were placed into basic writing courses at the 1992 Conference on Basic Writing (Adams et al., "Accelerated Learning"). Adams and his coauthors recall how he had to engage in quick thinking to frame his data analysis in a manner that would invite conference goers into possibility. We note how the question engages collaborative creative thinking: "What would happen [...] if instead of isolating basic writers in developmental courses, we could mainstream them directly into first-year composition, while also

providing appropriate support to help them succeed?" (53). Yet inviting approaches are not without reflective, honest critiques. In his keynote address at that same conference, Bartholomae evokes the image of a "tidy house," a metaphor that highlights the interior spaces which basic writing occupies. A year after the conference, *JBW* publishes Bartholomae's argument as a four-part thought experiment, furthering the conversation,

> There was much talk at the Maryland conference about abolishing basic writing and folding its students into the mainstream curriculum, providing other forms of support (tutorials, additional time, a different form of final evaluation). Karen Greenberg and I argued this point at the open session. I am suspicious, as I said then, of the desire to preserve "basic writing" as a key term simply because it is the one we have learned to think with or because it has allowed us our jobs or professional identities. (20-21)

Bartholomae invites us to engage in social material practices that disrupt the fixed, and comfortable, subject position of *teaching* basic writing, when basic writing becomes itself an institutional certainty (21).

Years later, we are noticing these metaphors of hospitality: the "tidy" nature of the house becoming less "tidy," as disruptive ideas about acceleration begin to circulate, and plans to renovate the house, as Tom Fox points out, spark a "flurry of soul-searching and innovation" (Fox 7). In fact, the 1992 conference disrupted the whole field of basic writing. Similarly, as editors Jennifer Maloy, Leah Anderst, and Cheryl Comeau-Kirschner write as context for this special issue, "the move back to in-person classes has brought with it the need to rethink the effectiveness of pre-pandemic pedagogies, curricula, policies and program structures." In this way, the story of the 1992 conference and its ripples continue to where we find ourselves now––another moment of "soul-searching and innovation" as the COVID-19 disruption challenges us to rethink our pre-pandemic placement and programmatic structures.

Similar to Adams questioning the effects of an unintended, isolating programmatic structure prior to the conference, prior to the COVID-19 disruption Sarah had already been noticing the labor conditions in FYC course delivery and teacher preparation in her role as the WPA. For example, adjunct teachers were the last to be given scheduling preference for FYC courses, and prior to the pandemic adjuncts delivered 100% of online asynchronous writing classes. Meanwhile, graduate students who were teachers, under

Sarah's supervision, seemed to overwhelmingly prefer in-person courses using pre-internet teaching approaches, including regular use of photocopies for reading and paper-based exchanges––preferences that we believe did not prepare them for a quickly changing higher education landscape. While regular FYC courses are primarily taught by adjunct writing instructors and graduate teaching assistants and overseen by Sarah, the basic writing (BW) courses were taught by both tenured professors in Developmental Education as well as a handful of adjunct writing instructors. Also, BW and AWP courses were generally offered in person. Approximately a quarter of the student writing population at our institution started in writing courses through the Developmental Education Department prior to the pandemic, with approximately 22% of the student writing population starting in BW courses and about 1-3% of the student writing population beginning in AWP courses that required a corequisite course. In these ways, the labor conditions were inhospitable to new and experienced writing teachers across departments and faculty ranks.

In response to this inhospitable environment, just prior to the disruption in Spring 2020, Sarah and a first-year TA cohort began to experiment with linked, team-taught online and face-to-face course sections, through which students enrolled in these sections would share a curriculum, teachers would share office hours, and both students and teachers would share labor-based grading contracts. The Hub concept was originally designed to address the inverted labor patterns and insufficient training graduate instructors were receiving in online teaching methods. Looking back, the Hub's pre-pandemic foundation emerged from a commitment to program hospitality, as its design featured intentional disruption of a "tidy house" of FYC requirements and teacher professional development and graduate teacher training. That is, the Fall 2019 decision to assign linked, team-taught online and in-person courses to beginning teachers was strategic, as it encouraged new instructors to not only hold each other accountable to providing their students with a positive learning experience but also to have more capacity for supporting their students due to the additional support team teaching offered them.

The Hub strategy reflected teacher preferences for delivery mode, leading to a complex and continually evolving structure. In the Fall 2021 iteration, teaching teams networked students with students in the other course sections they taught––whether asynchronous or in-person––through a shared online classroom space. By networking students across sections, teaching teams provide students with the opportunity to connect to a larger community and flexibility in how they participate (online or face-to-face)

regardless of the section students initially register for, while maintaining a 20 to 1 student to faculty ratio and multiple opportunities for student to teacher contact. This hybrid structure enables students' course completion because courses are linked by team teaching. One student, for example, moved to Florida with their military family months into an in-person course section and was able to complete the course asynchronously thanks to the hybrid design. In this way, the Hub strategy was informed by successful AWP structures that welcome students with varying circumstances and writing needs into the FYC classroom and provide them with meaningful learning experiences and intentional, targeted support.

In the next narrative section, after providing some institutional context and recalling the significant challenges that came with the early days of the pandemic, we highlight how hospitality as praxis was *also* foundational to our experiment with a pandemic and post-pandemic programmatic structure, the FYC Hub. Although the Hub was not designed with acceleration in mind, our goal is to establish how this fluid concept of Hub teaching is consistent with the larger disciplinary concept of an "accelerated writing program" in pandemic teaching and learning conditions. We make this argument by reviewing our institution's pre- and post-pandemic placement patterns which reveal that the pandemic disruption––in our context where the Hub model was already developing––led to not only more students enrolling directly into FYC, but also to more student belonging and to higher pass rates in the Hub courses than in the non-Hub courses.

Collaborative Tactics in Pandemic Disruption

At the far north public state university where we both worked in 2020, signs displaying "you belong here" hang down from lamp posts, greeting you as you enter the Troth Yeddha' campus. The university's belonging campaign started around the same time as the Hub's inception and shortly before the pandemic forced our institution to pivot to online learning in March 2020. As an open admissions university that attracts a diverse student population, developmental writing and math courses are offered through the Developmental Education Department, which is independent (and located in a different college/funding structure) from the Mathematics & Statistics and English Departments. Our institution's small AWP, which requires enrollment in a 1-credit corequisite course with only 1-2 sections a semester, is also taught by writing faculty in the Developmental Education Department. In contrast to the supplementary support course model, like AWPs, the Hub

instead focuses on facilitating student connections and belonging within the FYC course structure.

The Hub's intention to facilitate student connections and belonging was put to the test, when in March 2020, place-based declarative signs of belonging were no longer relevant, as writing courses, like most other college courses, were mandated to finish the semester virtually. The pivot to online instruction, a disruption to our familiar routines of in-person learning, meant that we had to improvise how we extended hospitality in a virtual location in order to facilitate student belonging. Our improvisations built on the foundation of what we know as committed teachers––build community––and one way we attempted to do this, like so many other instructors and higher education professionals at that time, was by showing warmth and being responsive to our students and colleagues in the virtual spaces through which we connected with them.

This foundational aspect of hospitality––creating welcoming and responsive spaces for students––was a challenge during these times since many location-based resources tied to the course delivery system were unprepared, including the University Writing Center, Student Support Services, Health and Counseling, the Undergraduate Research office, and Testing Services, all of which primarily offered in-person delivery of events and support. While our institution has long offered asynchronous writing courses, and while a handful of teachers were part of the Hub pilot in Fall 2019 and were still undergoing training in asynchronous teaching, the majority of graduate student teachers and their students were unprepared for the shift to an entirely asynchronous teaching model. Exacerbating all of this was the need for internet connectivity, which our institution provided by allowing students to connect to the internet from their cars in the various parking lots around campus. Yet, this required that students had their own personal transportation, which posed another access issue. This whole system, and the severe limitations to our response, isolated teachers and students even further. How could we continue our experimentation with Hub relationships when faced with these access issues?

These access issues forced us to adopt an alternative, more accommodating placement method for students. Since standardized placement tests were unavailable, an in-house placement method had to be improvised. The process connected developmental faculty with Sarah and the Writing Program through collaborative service in the reading and scoring of student writing. The placement method we adopted during the pandemic was a Google Form published on the university's website and privileged

accommodating the needs of the student and the reader doing the labor of the placement (see appendix). That is, the writing was untimed and could be completed at any point leading up to course registration, just as the collaborative scoring process was as timely as possible. Both Sarah and her developmental colleagues agreed to score any writer that addressed the requirements of the prompt as FYC-ready.

The result of this in-house, *messy*, placement system led to an additional opportunity in hospitality, as the number of students enrolling directly into regular FYC courses rather than AWP or developmental courses increased. In this period, Sarah also recalls the in-depth discussions she had with developmental colleagues on how to create the most straightforward experience for students and how the decisions needed to be tracked so that they could hold the new placement system accountable to the results. This more accommodating placement method that we adopted during the pandemic teaches us two things: disruption is an invitation to rebuild more welcoming spaces collaboratively, and embracing hospitality is generative of more hospitality.

The hospitality extended to students, then, resulted in a higher percentage of students being placed directly into FYC than before the pandemic. We noticed this increase in the number of FYC students by comparing the overall enrollment trends in BW, AWP, and FYC courses from Fall 2017 to
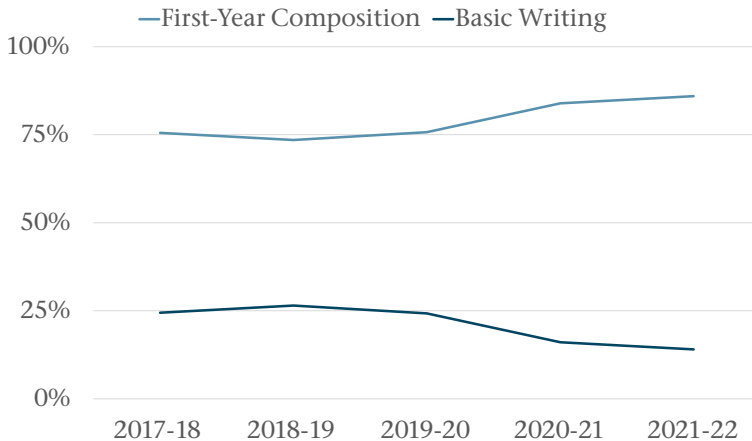
Figure 2. FirstYear Composition and Basic Writing Enrollment Trends from 2017-2022

Spring 2022. From Fall 2017 to Spring 2020, prior to the pandemic and the placement changes it necessitated, enrollment in BW, AWP, and FYC courses remained consistent. However, beginning in Fall 2020, after the pandemic forced placement methods to change, enrollment in BW decreased by almost 10% and increased in FYC by almost 10%, while our institution's AWP's enrollment remained relatively consistent between 1-3% of the overall student writing population. The trend of dwindling enrollment in BW courses and increasing enrollment in regular FYC courses continued during the 2021-2022 academic year when the placement system we adapted during the pandemic was still in place. From the 2020-2021 to 2021-2022 academic year, enrollment in our AWP increased by 3%, while BW decreased by another 5%, and regular FYC increased by another 2%. And in Fall 2021, approximately 29% of the FYC student population enrolled in a Hub course.

Although it is possible that other factors could have contributed to the number of students enrolling into AWP and regular FYC courses, we believe it was a result of the more accommodating in-house writing placement method and the partnership between the Developmental Education Program and the Writing Program since the increase in FYC enrollment immediately followed these changes (see fig. 2). What is most notable about this increase in regular FYC enrollment is that it resulted in acceleration that did not place additional conditions on students, as students were suddenly––and not necessarily intentionally–– mainstreamed into regular FYC
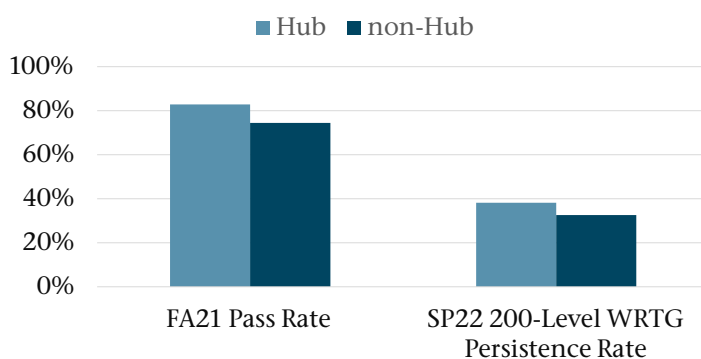
Figure 3. Fall 2021 FYC Pass Rates and Spring 2022 200-Level Writing Persistence Rates

classes rather than being placed into BW or AWP courses, both of which would have required students to take an additional course. As such, we read pandemic disruptions and the unintended acceleration that resulted as leading to both tactical (*improvisational*) collaboration and also to a more hospitable encounter for students who may have otherwise experienced a non-credit bearing writing course sequence––an additional hurdle that can lead to the development of "deficit perspectives," questions of belonging, and othering (Parisi and Fogelman 53).

Indeed, Adams and his coauthors note that non-credit bearing writing courses give students the "sense that they are excluded from the real college, that they are stigmatized as weak writers, and that they may not be 'college material'" ("Accelerated Learning" 60). They indicate how these perspectives and the need to take non-credit bearing courses can lead to higher attrition rates, stating that "the longer the pipeline, the more likely there will be 'leakage' from it––in other words, the more likely students will drop out before passing first-year composition" ("Accelerated Learning" 53). Many writing scholars have raised concern that this "leakage" has a greater impact on students from traditionally underprivileged backgrounds, pointing to equity and access issues associated with placement, traditional grading, and non-credit bearing, sequenced writing courses (Ihara; Inoue, "Writing Ecologies"; Inoue, "Grading Contracts"; Parisi and Fogelman). Considering the underrepresented student population that basic writing typically serves, we believe that the collaboration between developmental and writing faculty and the placement method changes implemented during the pandemic widened the gate at our institution for students who are often multiply marginalized in higher education. This "gate widening" can be seen in the data we pulled in figure 2, as the funnel begins to open up after placement changes were implemented for Fall 2020. More notably, this may have also increased accessibility to higher education beyond FYC for underprivileged students, as our data in figure 3 shows Hub students having higher pass rates in their FYC courses compared to their non-Hub peers in the Fall 2021 semester. It is also worth noting that more Hub students persisted in their requisite, 200-level writing course the semester immediately following their Hub experience, as this could suggest that a positive FYC experience correlates with higher college persistence rates (see fig. 3).

By embracing the experimentation and hospitality at the foundation of the acceleration movement, we were able to respond to pandemic disruptions with an improvisational willingness to experiment further in order to demonstrate to students and teachers that they "belong here." In the next

section, we offer a theoretical framework for program hospitality, followed by the story of how Sarah and Tara put this hospitality into practice. We hope to show how the experience was the beginning of what would become a successful semester for Sarah, for the graduate students learning to teach, for Tara, a willing collaborator, and most importantly, for our FYC students, some of whom were successfully accelerated as a result of our institution's pandemic-era placement changes and the more supportive Hub model.

PANDEMIC HOSPITALITY AS FEMINIST AND TEMPORAL

> The guest must cross the threshold and trust the host's good intentions. Hospitality––this temporary, shared residence of stranger insider and stranger outsider.

> ––Haswell, Haswell, and Blalock, 712

The concept of hospitality as a double-edged tool has shown up very recently in this journal, as Amy D. Williams, Sarah Kate Johnson, Anika Shumway, and Dennis L. Eggett have drawn from Dale Jacobs and Matthew Heard's discussion in *JAC* about the relationship between openness and hospitality. These researchers connect openness to hospitality when an educational experience feels "enriching. . . when it welcomes another" (37). Hospitality evokes social-material practices, and practicing hospitality with each other depends on "the affective dimensions of 'being' open and the affective risks and rewards of openness" (40).

Haswell, Haswell, and Blalock similarly discuss the dual nature of hospitality when they mention that it can "turn on the wielder like a double-edged knife," challenging conventional understandings of the term that usually connote welcome and transaction (711). This latent threat is also found in the Derridean understanding of hospitality. Examining the term's etymology, Derrida points to the paradox of hospitality, whose root, "hostis," means both host and guest, friend and enemy (Derrida and Dufourmantelle 45). Etymologically speaking, hospitality simultaneously suggests warm reception and danger, and in this way, can potentially be hostile and disruptive to guest and host alike. From this observation, Derrida outlines two contradictory understandings of hospitality: conditional hospitality and absolute hospitality. He describes conditional hospitality as inflicting "violence," since the guest must "ask for hospitality in a language which by definition is not his own, the one imposed on him by the master of the house" (Derrida

and Dufourmantelle 15). Absolute hospitality, on the other hand, requires that the host "open[s] up [their] home and that [they] give not only to the foreigner...but to the absolute, unknown, anonymous other" (Derrida and Dufourmantelle 25). According to Derrida, then, hospitality evokes two contradictory understandings in which host or guest must relinquish too much of the self to the other.

Because of the dual risks associated with hospitality that others have pointed out, we want to be transparent about the potential benefits and risks of adopting hospitality in teaching first-year composition and in training new graduate teaching assistants, to urge caution when implementing it into program development. For example, the Fall 2020 semester experienced these challenges, and Sarah was impacted by the personal cost of not fully recognizing these risks. To be brief, Sarah overextended her labor in training beginning teachers in Fall 2020, and the result was a failed collaboration. Sarah's experience calls attention to the risks WPAs may experience when offering collaboration and shared labor through team teaching (see Haswell, Haswell, and Blalock's Scenario 3, 710). Nevertheless, Sarah's vision for improved teaching and learning conditions by being accountable to labor and valuing process persisted, evidenced by this article's email inviting more collaboration and support into delivering the Hub mission the spring that followed the failed Hub iteration.

Building from this failure, and faced with the continuing isolation teachers and their students were experiencing as a result of the pandemic, Tara and Sarah improvised a new iteration of the "Hub" together in Fall 2021. Our plan was to divide into smaller decentralized Hubs, allowing for not only more intentional experimentation, but also for more opportunities to practice hospitality. Sarah and Tara's intentional decentering of the Hub enabled a proliferation of shared authority. Yet, this first required that Sarah recognize the importance of framing and transparency with Tara and the new graduate teachers on the first day of orientation. Sarah named how a single entity's position and authority over the entirety of collaboration was a problem in previous iterations, and how in their work together, they could try to solve this challenge with a tiered-mentoring system, smaller teaching teams, and mentors embedded into each team. Second, Sarah had to imagine how existing structures could support the decentralized model. This strategic thinking led her to use the shared time of the corequisite graduate course *Teaching College Composition* to enable team collaboration: each week, one hour of a three hour block of time was turned over to teams, asking them to apply theory to immediate practice. By sharing her own instructional

time *with* teachers, more spaces could emerge where feelings of collective ownership and belonging for students could take place. While the concept of hospitality typically invokes place-based associations, Clive Barnett invites us to consider the temporal aspects of hospitality, writing, "temporality is significant because it emphasizes the degree to which responsibility is motivated in response to the activity of others" (6). Through her responsiveness to the failed Hub iteration, Sarah demonstrated temporal hospitality by inviting Tara to help implement a decentralized, collaborative teaching community.

While responsiveness was key to creating a more hospitable space for beginning teachers, creating a space where a proliferation of shared authority and new tactics could emerge also exemplified a disruptive hospitality that is feminist in nature. Indeed, Hamington describes feminist hospitality as "[exploring] the antimony between disruption and connection. . . and] [reflecting] a performative extension of care ethics that seeks to knit together and strengthen social bonds through psychic and material sharing" (24). Working with existing structures enables response and creativity (knitting together) and also repurposing and remixing—sharing ideas and being open to how they get taken up and used and reused. Reflecting on the challenges posed by a larger, more diverse FYC population and new graduate instructors navigating the intricacies of pandemic era teaching, Sarah and Tara embraced hospitality with a feminist orientation, anticipating needs by offering teachers a more intimate space for collaboration with a personal mentor. Moreover, Sarah's decision to leave the space where the collaboration occurred enabled more hospitable practices, giving over to the teaching teams. As both Sarah and Tara created room in relinquishing power, teachers were able to show up with their own designs.

In these ways, Sarah and Tara embraced a strategic, feminist hospitality when they chose to collaborate on the Fall 2021 Hub iteration despite the potential risks in doing so, and they enabled the decentralized Hubs to practice temporal hospitality. By recognizing how a centralized Hub was not conducive to the graduate instructors feeling empowered to share their ideas, Sarah and Tara curtailed the potential risks of hospitality in the Fall 2021 Hub iteration by creating more intimate spaces wherein community building, negotiation, and change were more likely to take place. One of the spaces where remixable materials were shared and changed was on an asynchronous teaching team, who referred to themselves as Team Aspen Grove. On this team was an embedded mentor-teacher––who Sarah referred to in her training design *as a lead teacher*—Tara. The Aspen Grove teaching team was made up of four beginning graduate students and Tara. In this

next section, we share further details about Aspen Grove's decision making, which was one of three teaching Hubs in the Fall 2021 semester, the same semester we share student success results.

Aspen Grove Tactics in Fall 2021

Coming from a background in academic advising and teaching, Tara was familiar with the unique challenges that the pandemic had posed for students, teachers, and administrators, and in this sense, was an ideal collaborator as she was able to offer the Hub an outside, tactical perspective. Despite her title as "lead teacher," Tara didn't feel like she had any sanctioned authority over her fellow teachers since she had a regular contract as an adjunct instructor and there was no clear organizational structure that placed her in a supervisory role or in a position of power over the graduate teaching assistants––only Sarah's title "lead teacher." Her rejection of the title "lead teacher" is, in fact, one way that Tara performed feminist hospitality. In this way, the revised Hub structure and Tara's disposition toward collaboration enabled her to show up holistically to the more intimate space offered in Fall 2021 to graduate teachers. Tara, having been trained by Sarah, illustrated her willingness and intent to collaborate by facilitating. Tara decided to prioritize listening to the ideas her fellow teachers proposed and to help them brainstorm ways to implement those ideas rather than trying to control how her teaching team adapted the Hub curriculum and activities for their course. This commitment to facilitation rather than leadership enabled a turn in direction from the other teams.

Tara's role on the team did differ from the other lead teachers' roles since she was working full-time and unable to attend all of the sessions and team-building exercises during orientation. So, on the Friday before classes started, when Tara's coteachers shared their plan for the class with her for the first time, Tara was surprised and a little uncomfortable by how much their plan stressed frequent peer interaction. This included using Slack as a discussion platform, wherein students were expected to take ownership of that space by posting digital postcards, sharing memes, connecting with five peers, and participating in both the problem-posing and problem-solving processes *weekly*. By requiring so much student interaction each week, Tara was worried it put too much demand on FYC students. However, noticing her intention to facilitate rather than lead, Tara decided to put aside her misgivings and to experiment with her coteachers in building community by encouraging students to engage with one another in these ways. By requir-

ing frequent interaction among students, Tara and her coteachers created an online space that invited students to further invent spaces of warmth and welcome. Although they didn't name it at the time, the Aspen Grove teaching team was practicing feminist hospitality by creating together this collaborative and networked online FYC space. Moreover, by "recognizing students' lives and experiences as essential components of their learning," Aspen Grove aimed to create meaningful learning experiences through activities that were simultaneously intended to build community, foster belonging, and facilitate learning in their online students (Eodice et al. 324).

Responsiveness was key to sustaining the hospitality that the Aspen Grove teaching team hoped would cultivate belonging and community among their students. And, because the disruption caused by the pandemic imposed hardships on students *and* teachers, the Aspen Grove teachers extended the same hospitality they demonstrated to their students to each other. In addition to actively responding to students in the Hub Slack space, the Aspen Grove teachers were in constant communication with each other in a private faculty Slack space. In this private faculty Slack space, Aspen Grove discussed possible readings, student concerns, and equitable labor division. Checking it regularly throughout the day, they often coached each other through challenging student issues, providing feedback and affirming the emotional labor these situations required, often offering to step in to share that labor. In their responsiveness, Aspen Grove showed care, compassion, and respect for each other and their students, setting the tone for the course. The Aspen Grove's temporal hospitality was mirrored by their students in the Hub Slack space, as students would likewise reach out to each other to provide encouragement and support (see Aspen Grove Collective). In this way, community care manifested in the FYC course and on the Aspen Grove teaching team, helping to facilitate belonging in both spaces.

By showing up as a facilitator, Tara built trust with her teaching team so that when a student concern arose, the Aspen Grove teachers were confident in their ability to address it collectively rather than responding in isolation. Tara initiated this practice by modeling her intention to collaborate with her coteachers as soon as the semester started. For instance, when one of their students only reached out to Tara with a concern during the first week of the semester, Tara made sure to relay the message to her coteachers in their private faculty Slack space and to ask for their input before responding, making sure to include her coteachers in her response to the student. In recognizing and valuing the insight her coteachers brought to the teaching team and by regularly asking for their input and advice about particular

student concerns, Tara demonstrated that it was okay to not always have all of the answers. Tara's coteachers, who were similarly willing collaborators, likewise understood the importance of being in agreement with one another and responding to students cohesively. From these inclinations, collaboration genuinely emerged, as the Aspen Grove teachers frequently sought each other out for guidance and just as readily provided each other with recommendations when requested. Yet, within this collaborative dynamic, tiered-mentoring also emerged, as Sarah mentored Tara in facilitating collaborative teaching tactics as lead teacher and as Tara mentored her team by sharing her institutional knowledge and teaching experiences when appropriate.

Initially a response to the unsustainable labor patterns and to the graduate teachers' preferences for pre-internet teaching approaches, the Hub became a responsive and hospitable solution to the disruption the pandemic would cause for students and instructors alike. The Hub increased capacity for community care so that when a member of a teaching team became ill, had travel needs, experienced loss or another personal difficulty, a shared curricular experience meant that teachers could help each other out, and students were never without a mentor or help. Sarah and her lead teachers' creative thinking about using contracted time more strategically, including shared office hours, automation of administrative tasks, and shared leadership, opened up space for community and belonging while encouraging tiered mentoring to take place. By disrupting standard approaches to writing curricula and discussion boards and inviting students to make personal connections to their work and the work of others, the sense of belonging Hub teachers facilitated in students through their hospitality may have helped bridge the traditionally siloed nature between students' academic and social lives, which was critical due to the continued hardships caused by the ongoing pandemic. Indeed, by choosing not to work in isolation and by choosing to work together, instructors had more capacity to support their students because of the support they provided to each other.

The correlation between Hub teachers' increased capacity to support their students and the Hub cohort's higher pass rate in FYC suggests that it might be possible to accelerate students in a FYC classroom that provides students with additional support through team-teaching rather than requiring AWP students to take an additional course. For example, basic and accelerated writing scholarship has long identified the need to provide students who are being accelerated as needing more support and time to write (Nicholes and Reimer). This has resulted in acceleration methods defaulting to the corequisite, studio, and stretch models. The corequisite ("inside and

alongside") and studio ("outside but alongside") models require concurrent enrollment in a supplementary support course, demanding more time from students in a single semester, and the stretch model requires students to take FYC over the course of two semesters (Adams et al., "Accelerated Learning" 54-55; Ritola et al. 65). Although AWPs remove the barrier of a non-credit bearing preparatory writing course, AWP students are still required to spend more of their own time and money on the acceleration.

As such, by experimenting with models that do not require students to take the additional course that is typically required by AWPs, we can save students the additional time and money associated with AWPs, embracing Reichert Powell's call for absolute hospitality in the FYC classroom. More data from different Hub cohorts and over a longer time period is needed to determine whether the Hub successfully accelerates students. However, the substantially higher pass rates of Hub students from Fall 2021 and their higher persistence and retention rates than their non-Hub peers, indicate that the hospitality Hub teachers extended to their students in Fall 2021 created a more welcoming space for students. Because standardized placement assessments have consistently placed historically underrepresented student groups into BW and AWP courses, the unintended acceleration that happened and the hospitality that Hub teachers met their students with may have helped us retain a diverse student population that makes our institution more representative.

FUTURE HOSPITABLE POSSIBILITIES AND WORKING TOGETHER

> In other words, should the movement to mainstream students previously classified as 'developmental' result in a composition program that is more like the dissolved 'basic writing' program––with its strengths, such as faculty collaboration around assessment, and its failings, with regard to equity and access––or might it lead us to imagine alternative approaches to curriculum and assessment that retain the communal spirit of 'basic writing' without it importing its more damaging elements?
>
> ––Rachel Ihara (101)

The alternative approaches Ihara prompts us to imagine are for us experiments in hospitality. In this article, we have shared how these experi-

ments affected teaching conditions in our context, but zooming out further to a programmatic, even disciplinary, scale, we are taking away how *disruption* functions as an invitation to experiment with the structure of the FYC course to help undergraduates belong.

While our experiment in Fall 2021 shows that an asynchronous, open door, large course can be successful, it is nevertheless reflecting on our commitment to feminist hospitality that has also led to us becoming more willing to adapt and respond in structural ways to the ongoing disruption of our times. Therefore, we are attuned, alongside Ihara, to the fact that this ongoing disruption "unsettles the distinction between 'basic' and 'regular' student writer," and will require more from individual instructors to support students with varying resources and needs (101). Given this reality, we are resolute in experimenting with how we can practice feminist hospitality alongside our students and our fellow teachers. As composition scholarship has long shown, this attention to material teaching and learning conditions is key to the production, distribution, reception, and circulation of knowledge. For example, in Fall 2023, the "Hub" once again expanded, where nine sections of FYC designed an emergent but remixed writing curriculum. In the words of one Hub writer, Martha, who grants us written permission to cite from a Hub archive analysis assignment, this structure helps writers and their teachers feel less alone:

> Anxiety is a common thing for most people here within the Hub to an extent. Not everyone has crippling social anxiety, and others may. Regardless, anxiety is something that is common for people to deal with. If it's left unchecked it may ruin opportunities that you could've taken being more confident. Or it may make it very difficult to connect with peers in class, but it's much easier within the Hub since it's a connected group of people that isn't just one class. Social anxiety is especially difficult to deal with since groups are a major part of school and education, but it doesn't have to affect our choices so much if we can figure out ways to try to help expose us to new experiences once we get the confidence to do so.

We appreciate Martha's invitation to "figure out ways to try to help expose us to new experiences" while still providing a nurturing timeline. We also read this as attesting to the Hub's hospitality and how this hospitality not only helps students establish a sense of belonging, but also makes students feel more confident to experiment, take risks, make connections, and persist.

The concept of hospitality necessitates material structures and relationships; that is, it requires negotiating the space within and against the walls of a small entranceway, organizing the mess where the coats and shoes, the personal belongings, are kept for a short while, so that all of us are more comfortable as we venture further inside the house.

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APPENDIX: WRITING PLACEMENT ASSESSMENT DURING COVID PANDEMIC

Students responded to the questions below through a Google form. Questions 4, 8, 9, and 10 provided scorers/administrators with context about students' academic histories and their familiarity with technologies, but Question 11 contains the prompt used for assessment.

1. What is the current date and time?
2. What is your email address?
3. What is your full name?
4. What was your high school GPA or the date of your GED? (Write N/A if unavailable.)
5. Please enter your name again.
6. What is your contact phone number?
7. Who is your UAF advisor, if you have one?
8. Which applications are you comfortable using?
9. What was your most recent writing class?
10. Is there anything else you would like us to know? Do you have any questions?
11. Please write an organized response (approximately 250 words), explaining success to someone who is unfamiliar with your community. What does success mean to you and/or your community? (Your response can be personal, and you may use "I.") Be sure to proofread before submission.
12. What is your student ID, if you have one?
13. If you prefer, you can upload your writing sample here instead of typing it.

§

Scorers and administrators used a Google sheet for tracking submitted assessments and for scoring purposes, which tracked the following information:

1. Status: The current status of the student's submission or application process.
2. Placement: The recommended placement level for the student based on their responses or writing sample.
3. Notes: Any additional comments or observations made by the scorers during the evaluation process.
4. Follow-Up: Does this student require a follow-up? If so, what steps will be taken?

5. Class Taken: The course(s) the student has taken, if applicable, for tracking their progress.
6. Grade Earned: The grade(s) the student received in relevant courses, if applicable.
7. Nanook Navigator Tag: Any internal tagging or tracking notes for future reference, related to advising or other university systems.

Disclaimer: We used a generative AI to recreate the survey and the tracking system. The survey is no longer available and this was generated by copying the header row of the data spreadsheet generated through the Google Form (since deleted).

Adapting Writing Studio Pedagogy for Flexible and Equitable Acceleration

Joanne Baird Giordano and Cassandra Phillips

ABSTRACT: *This article describes the writing studio model as a corequisite option for writing course acceleration in a post-pandemic era. The authors provide an overview of writing studio pedagogy and strategies for using the writing studio model to develop a corequisite support course. They provide results of a research study on a multi-campus initiative to accelerate students to credit-bearing writing with studio support. The article concludes with suggestions for applying writing studio pedagogy to other types of college literacy courses beyond corequisite support.*

KEYWORDS: *acceleration; adaptability; corequisite; studio*

In our experiences as instructors and literacy program coordinators in two-year, open-access environments, we've worked for decades to identify and address ways to provide literacy support for students whose needs are not met in traditional writing classes. We have spent our careers working on strategies for reducing basic skills coursework through placement processes and corequisite support and also by working on the complex challenge of providing equitable literacy support for students who need it. In our community college teaching experiences, we have worked with thousands of students whose linguistic, educational, social, and cultural backgrounds have required us to engage in critically reflective teaching and to constantly re-envision what it means to be a college writing teacher.

Joanne Baird Giordano *is an Associate Professor of English, Linguistics, and Writing Studies at Salt Lake Community College. She has many years of experience with writing course placement and literacy program coordination. Her research focuses on students' transitions to college reading and writing, along with teaching experiences of two-year college literacy educators. She chairs the Two-Year College English Association.*

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Initiatives that accelerate students into first-year writing while reducing or eliminating students' time in basic literacy skills programs have permanently altered reading and writing instruction at public two-year colleges and other open-access institutions. Reform movements are also reshaping curricula and program structures at community colleges and other public institutions, and they are changing or sometimes even controlling the access that students do or do not have to postsecondary literacy coursework and learning support for reading and writing. Some developmental education reform efforts--including Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) initiatives--stem from disciplinary research about student learning that questions assumptions about college readiness behind the methods used for placement, curriculum, and instruction in basic English skills classes (Adams et al.; Klausman et al.; Phillips and Giordano, "Developing"; Saxon et al.). But often developmental education reforms are imposed on writing and literacy programs by administrative decisions or legislative mandates (Whinnery and Pomeplia), including the required integration of the highest level of developmental reading and writing in Texas (Paulson, Overschelde, Wiggins) and massive statewide placement and developmental reform requirements in California through AB 705 (California Community Colleges).

These mandates can be austerity measures masquerading as social justice work, especially when they are imposed on literacy programs and English Departments without input from faculty or an understanding of the locally situated needs of a program and the students it serves. For example, reforms can come from an institutional or state push to reduce the cost of college or time to degree completion (Dana Center; Bailey et al.) without providing resources to implement change in ways that support students' postsecondary literacy development or maintain sustainable workloads for instructors. Reforms can create inequitable learning environments in which students are expected to complete first-year writing coursework regardless of their prior educational experiences or individual literacy needs.

Although the writing studio is one of the earliest versions of a developmental education reform model, it's a promising approach to corequisite support for an age of acceleration (Keller) in which students are expected to speed up the rate at which they develop postsecondary literacy skills at the same time that their literacy practices outside of school are rapidly evolving. The writing studio provides a pathway for faculty to center their teaching on responding to locally situated student needs even when administrative mandates require them to reduce or eliminate the time that students spend in basic or developmental reading and writing courses. The writing studio

is a corequisite model that college writing and literacy programs might consider in a post-pandemic age in which many students have experienced disruptions to their K through 12 and postsecondary education. Because studio courses are structured in flexible ways that can be adapted to meet the needs of a wider range of students than those who are accelerated to first-year writing, they can embed an opportunity for equitable support across an entire writing program. Although some ALP classes build on studio pedagogy, writing studios are distinct from other types of writing support courses because they focus on students' choices about the writing that they bring to the corequisite classroom or online learning space. We encourage writing programs to expand their definitions of developmental education as contributing to students' overall development in all of their courses across their time in college, re-examine the possibilities of corequisite support, and also re-imagine how to teach writing beyond a traditional classroom.

In this article, we show how studio pedagogy offers a promising foundation for acceleration in a post-pandemic era with focused attention on equity and students' literacy development. We provide an overview of key strategies for using the writing studio model to develop a corequisite writing support course. We also describe a program development and research project at a multi-campus two-year institution that piloted writing studio as a strategy for accelerating students to credit-bearing writing courses. We conclude with suggestions for applying writing studio pedagogy to other types of college literacy courses beyond corequisite support to address literacy challenges that arose and continue with the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Place of the Writing Studio in Reform Models

Acceleration efforts--both those coming from literacy educators and those imposed on programs--take on various forms (Schak et al.; Hassel et al.; Rutschow and Schneide). Strategies include lowering placement cut scores, reforming placement processes (Klausman et al.), eliminating multiple levels of developmental and/or language coursework, integrating reading and writing (Stahl and Armstrong; Saxon et al.), moving students who would otherwise be placed into developmental reading or writing courses into credit-bearing composition with corequisite support, and eliminating developmental education entirely without any support. What all of these approaches have in common is the idea that some or all students can and should be moved through a writing, reading, or math program sequence

more quickly than indicated by standardized test scores or other placement measures.

The underlying goal of acceleration is educational equity. Our thinking about equity draws from interdisciplinary scholarship on student success (e.g., McNair et al.; Suh et al.). For our writing studies work, we use this definition: "equity in higher education refers to institutional and pedagogical strategies that create equal educational opportunities for all students regardless of their cultural and social backgrounds. This includes fair treatment, equitable access to resources, fair assessments of student learning, and support with learning processes for all students in a classroom, program, or institution" (Giordano et al. 24). Equity in a writing program doesn't automatically happen through students' presence in a credit-bearing writing course because of placement reforms or acceleration. In postsecondary literacy programs, educational equity comes from creating conditions for learning and literacy development that allow students from diverse educational, social, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds to thrive in higher education (Suh et al.).

On the surface, acceleration appears to be an equitable approach to reducing students' time to degree completion. However, acceleration initiatives can become inequitable when they make it more challenging for students to complete credit-bearing coursework or maintain the academic standing required for access to financial aid or staying in college. Further, data from multiple studies before the COVID-19 pandemic suggest that developmental education reform initiatives have minimal impact on degree completion rates (Edgecombe and Bickerstaff). Therefore, at the institutional level, effective acceleration programs need to account for students' literacy development and learning experiences across multiple years and not just their initial college semester.

The writing studio is one of the earliest program-level strategies for supporting educational equity by reimagining how students learn to develop as college writers. In the 1990s, Rhonda C. Grego and Nancy S. Thompson ("Repositioning"; "Writing Studio"; *Thirdspaces*) developed the writing studio, which became a model for supporting postsecondary writers who weren't (and still often aren't) served by traditional approaches to teaching basic writing and first-year composition. Unlike some other corequisite support models that use a more formal structure, a writing studio provides students with in-the-moment teaching structured around the needs of each student in a small group workshop setting (e.g. Ritola et al.; Leach et al.). The studio was a forerunner to other models of corequisite writing support, including the Accelerated Learning Program (Adams, et al.). The first issue

of the *Basic Writing e-Journal* (1999) highlighted the writing studio model as one of five key approaches to structuring developmental writing courses (Lalicker). However, the studio model isn't limited to corequisite support for acceleration or developmental coursework because it can be used at every level of a writing program (from non-degree through graduate school) and also has applications in professional development for postsecondary and K-12 teachers (Brooke, Coyle, and Walden; Bostock).

The studio model has perhaps received less attention than ALP but warrants consideration for institutions that are seeking to enhance student learning through corequisite support while decreasing students' time to writing requirement completion. The studio remains a faculty-driven model that provides intensive individualized literacy instruction and, therefore, should be considered as part of disciplinary and local responses to policies that attempt to reshape how writing is delivered and taught, especially at community colleges and other access-oriented institutions. Compared to other models for reducing developmental education coursework, writing studios provide institutions with more flexibility because they focus directly on each writer's unique needs across an entire writing program and some-times in general education courses. Support for writers' literacy needs is of particular importance in open-admissions institutions where students' needs are widely varied and in post-pandemic programs where many students have had disrupted educational experiences.

The writing studio can also be an effective alternative at smaller campuses and institutions that lack the funding or institutional support to implement a fully developed ALP program. A carefully structured studio program can potentially be more cost effective compared to ALP because classes can be offered for fewer credits and require less staffing compared to the Community College of Baltimore County three-credit ALP model. A studio can also reduce students' number of non-degree credits from three to one. An underlying assumption behind the ALP model is that students need more classroom time when they are accelerated to a credit-bearing course (Adams et al.). In contrast, the writing studio often operates under the idea that students can receive individual and collaborative support with their writing projects with fewer credits but more focused time in class. Depending on how they are structured, studio courses can be offered for college credit. Studio courses also offer students, faculty, and programs more flexibility in scheduling because learners can be enrolled in any section of a writing course or in different courses.

Studio courses can potentially help faculty push back against imposed legislative and administrative mandates for developmental education reforms by offering both faculty and students more control over how writing is taught and how students learn (e.g., Ritola et al.). Although faculty usually don't have the power to eliminate mandates, the writing studio can help them ensure that their teaching practices reflect student learning needs within a local context and in a particular course section. The studio model questions and reimagines the spaces in which postsecondary literacy learning takes place. As Chandler and Sutton note in the introduction to *The Writing Studio Sampler: Stories About Change*, "[Studio] was designed to create a means to study relationships between learning and institutional contexts; to challenge the discourses, structures, and material circumstances which create and maintain those contexts; and to support all stakeholders in learning to navigate those contexts and discourses" (5). Writing studio pedagogy offers program coordinators, instructors, and students' agency over the content and structure of a writing course. When faced with mandates to eliminate developmental education courses or accelerate students, programs can use the writing studio as a flexible strategy for supporting students' postsecondary literacy development.

Writing Studio Pedagogy

Like other types of studios in higher education, writing studios are spaces for collective learning, individual practice, application, and creation under the guidance of an expert. Studio writing courses take place in sites of in-person or online learning spaces outside traditional classrooms. Students meet in a small writing community of peers with an instructor who facilitates discussions, workshop activities, and instruction based on the writing projects that individual students bring to the studio session. Grego and Thompson explain that the "Writing Studio attaches to an existing course or academic pursuit, a one-hour-per-week workshop, where students bring their work, sometimes to 'work on it' but more often to present the work and obtain feedback so that they can go away and work on it further" (*Thirdspaces* 8). Drawing from Bill Macaulay, Grego and Thompson describe the interactive setting for studio writing courses and programs: "a studio learning environment is one where activities of production are undertaken individually but in a place where others are working and discussing their work simultaneously, where teachers provide, along with other students, guidance, suggestions, input" (*Thirdspaces* 7).

Writing studio courses normally don't have a set curriculum or planned class periods. Rather, instructors do in-the-moment teaching by adapting their instruction and workshop activities according to the unique needs of each writer at a particular point in the semester based on the self-selected writing process work and completed drafts that students bring to a studio session. The studio approach emphasizes a student's own literacy goals as they emerge and develop throughout a course and sometimes over more than one semester. In a studio setting, students learn about how to identify and develop their own goals as college writers and readers, which is crucial for students who are inexperienced with self-assessing their literacy and learning needs. *The CCCC and CWPA Joint Statement in Response to the CO-VID-19 Pandemic* identifies reflection as a crucial component of pandemic era writing instruction: "Invite reflection through which writers identify and articulate a relationship between class-related activities, their development of a particular composition, and their development as writers, generally." With support from an instructor who facilitates studio activities, students reflect on what they want and need at a particular point in the semester in one or more courses taken concurrently with the studio, which helps them work toward making independent decisions about their learning and development as college readers and writers.

The writing studio can be a flexible learning space for students who need support with learning how to collaborate with others, along with students who need facilitated help with making their own literacy choices. In *Teaching Across Cultural Strengths*, Chávez and Federline make a case for college classrooms that support students from both individuated and integrated (or collective) learning cultures. They argue that "To learn most completely, it is critical to study, reflect, and process both individually and collectively" (16). An effective writing studio can guide students through the process of both individual and collective learning with time to work on literacy processes that draw from both types of learning, including individual and shared process work, private and collective revision, and self-reflection and peer review. Meeting a student's individual learning needs does not automatically mean individualized work because most students need time and practice to develop collaborative (or integrated) learning skills. At the same time, studio pedagogy can help students learn how to become more self-directed and do the types of process work for a literacy project that instructors expect them to do on their own.

The following chart outlines differences between a writing studio and a traditional writing classroom or a corequisite course in which the instructor

Table 1. Comparison of Lecture/Discussion and Writing Studio

Lecture/Discussion Writing Course	Writing Studio
The instructor plans for each class period ahead of time.	As a group (and sometimes individually), students decide what to work on during a class period through instructor facilitation.
The instructor selects discussion topics.	Students choose discussion topics in consultation with the instructor.
All students typically study the same topics.	Students choose and focus on literacy topics and strategies based on their own needs with guidance from the instructor.
All students complete the same homework assignments.	Each student selects and completes homework assignments based on an individual learning plan and their needs as college writers at a particular moment in time.
Process work usually focuses on a single assignment that all students work on.	Process work emerges from students' varied college writing projects based on their individual choices.
Students usually receive a schedule at the beginning of the semester.	Students help create the schedule for most activities. The instructor might schedule due dates for a few major assignments (for example, midterm and final reflections).
Grades are often based on an evaluation of a student's writing.	Grades are usually based on self-assessment and completion of course activities.

preplans lessons and assignments. We both use versions of this chart in our programs to help instructors understand how studio teaching differs from other types of literacy learning coursework.

The structure for a writing studio can vary across programs and instructors, depending on the purpose of the course, the relationship between the course and a writing or literacy program, and the needs of the students that it serves. It's important to note that some ALP classrooms and programs draw from studio pedagogy, but studio teaching isn't inherently a part of ALP, especially in programs in which instructors prepare lectures, predetermined classroom activities, and assignments.

We have taught in and coordinated studio programs at different college campuses. All have had small studio class sizes ranging from four to eleven students, depending on funding and placement practices. For example, Giordano taught a writing studio course at the University of Wisconsin Marathon County with a format that followed the faculty development training that we provided to instructors across our state (Phillips and Giordano, "Developing"). She worked with students who were accelerated from a developmental course to first-year writing through multiple measures placement. The classes met at a designated table in the campus writing center. Students started the class by reporting on their work from the previous week and previewing their upcoming writing assignments from other courses (for example, first-year writing research proposals or a political science article analysis). The class worked together to determine activities that they would individually and collectively work on during the studio workshop time.

Students then spent about 35 minutes of active work time with activities varying across the semester, depending on their writing projects and processes. Activities for a typical class period included one-on-one work with the instructor; small group collaborative activities and peer review; individual planning, drafting, or research time; whole class peer review; and reflective writing or self-assessments. Writing center tutors sometimes provided additional support or helped students identify work that they could do in the writing center after class. Students typically worked on first-year writing course assignments but had the freedom to select any work from their college courses. At the end of the class period, the entire group met together as a group. Students recorded their learning in a digital studio journal and created a plan for the upcoming week, which provided students with accountability and gave them a to-do list of literacy tasks to complete for their studio homework.

We have adapted this basic writing studio structure to different contexts based on students' literacy needs at institutions. For example, Phillips now coordinates a bridge program at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee where the writing studio sections include up to 11 students who are all enrolled in the same first-year writing course (although not in the same sections). Most students are from communities that have traditionally been underrepresented in or excluded from higher education, and this program gives them an opportunity to enroll directly into degree credit courses. At a different Wisconsin campus, Giordano taught studio sections for second language writers after campus funding was eliminated for ESL courses. Each class period included mini lessons on language learning topics identified by the students through discussions about their own writing, linguistic experiences, and challenges adapting to the culture of higher education in the United States. The individualized approach of the writing studio created a learning space in which students from varying levels of proficiency in English could participate and learn. During the pandemic, Phillips has coordinated asynchronous sections in Wisconsin built around online discussion boards. Finally, at Salt Lake Community College, Giordano teaches synchronous online writing studio sections for returning adult learners who can't attend in person classes on campus. Students submit work ahead of time through an online discussion board, which allows the class to view and interact with each other's work. Students engage in activities through Zoom to discuss and work on their writing.

The characteristics of the writing studio that we describe distinguish it from other types of writing and corequisite courses in three important ways: 1) teaching strategies emphasize students' agency as writers; 2) the instructor creates flexible in-the-moment learning opportunities; and 3) the instructor provides formative assessment and feedback for the purpose of supporting students' goals as writers rather than assessment for grading. In a corequisite writing studio, an instructor can move entirely away from grading the quality of students' work and instead simply assess and provide feedback on their postsecondary literacy development for a project and across a course. The instructor also moves away from a lecture-discussion format or pre-planned workshops to facilitating learning based on issues that arise from students' questions and literacy choices. As Maske and Garret note in "Studio Bricolage," a writing studio teacher must embody a "collaborative learner, guide, or facilitator" (58). However, taking on these roles as a studio instructor often requires instructors to make significant adjustments to not

only their teaching but their thinking about the varied ways in which college writers learn.

Using a Studio for Flexible Writing Support

Studio courses can potentially provide a flexible way for faculty to develop a corequisite support course for either faculty-driven reforms or administrative mandates. For example, a writing studio can be used outside of an acceleration initiative and developmental education reforms to provide support to students' whose literacy needs aren't met in a traditional classroom, especially those whose educational pathways have been and continue to be altered by pandemic disruptions.

The flexibility to change program structures and teaching practices based on local student needs has become increasingly important in the pandemic era. *The CCCC and CWPA Joint Statement in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic* emphasizes that flexibility is a crucial component of pandemic pedagogy:

> Writers, teachers, and students all use flexibility in their roles. We draw here from the definition of flexibility found in the Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing: 'the ability to adapt to situations, expectations, or demand.' In periods of crisis, flexibility is even more important in order to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances. We encourage habits of mind on the part of both students and instructors (and program decision-makers) that will make it possible for everyone learning in a virtual classroom to do their best work.

The flexibility to "adapt to rapidly changing circumstances" is the foundation of the in-the-moment teaching of studio courses. The studio model questions and reimagines the spaces in which postsecondary learning takes place. As Chandler and Sutton note, "[Studio] was designed to create a means to study relationships between learning and institutional contexts; to challenge the discourses, structures, and material circumstances which create and maintain those contexts; and to support all stakeholders in learning to navigate those contexts and discourses" (5). In other words, the writing studio model provides postsecondary literacy programs with a framework for writing instruction that they can adapt to their local contexts and to immediate, constantly evolving student needs at a particular moment in time.

The flexibility of studio teaching allows instructors to shift away from a gatekeeping function that often accompanies assessment in traditional writing courses toward formative assessment for the purpose of supporting students' literacy development. The studio's emphasis on a writing teacher as facilitator or guide normally requires instructors to rethink the purpose of college writing assessment (Grego and Thompson, "Writing Studio"). In a responsive, student-centered studio learning space, assessment becomes a tool for providing feedback, learning about students' needs, responding to students requests for feedback and support, and engaging in critically reflective self-assessment of teaching practices.

The pandemic has also revealed disparities in students' access to and experiences with technology. Individualized instruction in a writing studio supports literacy in a digital age for students who have experienced inequities in their access to technology. The global pandemic has further accelerated the rate at which college students are required to use technology as a tool for learning and a delivery mechanism for their educational experiences, while also creating potential barriers to college preparation in K-12 schools. For example, the 2022 National Assessment of Educational Progress recorded the largest decline in fourth and eighth grade reading scores in three decades (NCES). We teach students who have never used computers or email, and they are enrolled in writing courses with students who had iPads or Chromebooks provided by their high schools to use throughout their secondary education. Some community college students come from rural or urban communities with internet deserts. For example, we have taught students who live in neighborhoods with neither broadband internet access nor reliable cell phone service. We also teach students with disabilities who are still learning to use assistive technology for writing. Studios provide students with opportunities for guided practice using technologies for college learning while also helping students with advanced digital literacy skills work on other ways to develop their writing.

In addition to pedagogical adaptability, the writing studio model also offers programs promising options for post-pandemic flexibility in how they structure corequisite support. When programs have limited resources, the writing studio model can be a flexible way to develop a corequisite program in combination with acceleration through changes to placement. Before the University of Wisconsin System restructured its two-year institution and merged campuses with four-year universities (Phillips and Giordano, "Messy Processes"; Sullivan), we coordinated the writing and developmental English programs for 13 open-admissions campuses, which included both very

small rural campuses and larger urban campuses plus an online program. Each campus adapted the studio model to reflect local student populations and workplace realities. Our studio program had a level of flexibility that benefited our open-admissions campuses with limited funding, locally situated constraints, and widely diverse student communities. For example, our smaller rural campuses had different student populations, budget problems, and staffing concerns in comparison to our larger urban campuses. Implementing a variable credit course that was not tied to a particular class or instructor was less logistically difficult to implement and less expensive in comparison to enrolling all students for three corequisite credits that matched accompanying designated sections of first-year writing. Campuses that served refugee communities and/or international students were able to offer second language writing studio sections and/or increase the number of studio credit hours for some students. Because we had students who sometimes took two years to complete first-year writing, we eventually offered an intermediate writing studio course on some campuses, which provided a second year of support for students as they worked toward completing general education writing requirements for an associate degree. Campuses were able to adapt their studio programs over time based on locally situated student community needs.

Writing Studio as Corequisite Support for Acceleration: A Case Study

To demonstrate how the writing studio model can be a flexible approach to student success through corequisite support, we share results from a University of Wisconsin System initiative to accelerate students to credit-bearing courses with corequisite support. Our efforts focused on using multiple measures placement to move students into first-year writing with studio support (Hassel and Giordano; Phillips and Giordano, "Developing"). One key difference for our program in comparison to some corequisite models was that we offered writing studio courses through advising for students who would benefit from supplemental support in first-year writing for reasons other than acceleration (e.g., Garret). Additional students who weren't required to take a corequisite were able to self-select the studio.

Our research indicates that individualized support through the writing studio was an essential part of success for the students we accelerated. In 2016, we collected data from five pilot campuses within our institution, which included a mix of small rural and larger urban locations. On those

campuses, 450 students placed into developmental writing based on their state system placement test scores. One student was successfully accelerated to English 102 (the core research course) and received an A grade. One-third (or 150) were accelerated to credit-bearing composition (English 101) through multiple measures placement. The following chart describes the courses that accelerated students chose to take:

Table 2. Students' Placement Choices

Enrollment Choice	Number of Students
First-Year Writing	109
Developmental or L2 Writing	17
No writing course	23

The results for students who were accelerated to credit-bearing writing were somewhat better than our typical annual course completion rates for students with direct English 101 placements (about 70% or sometimes slightly higher):

Table 3. Completion Outcomes for Accelerated Students

First-Year Writing Outcome	Number of Students
Completion with required grade of C or higher	84 (77%)
Completion with a C- or D grade	6 (6%)
Withdrawal from the course	23 (21%)
Failing grade	0

The following year, our institutional research office helped us collect data from all campuses with a studio program. This research included writing course outcomes for students who were accelerated to first-year writing, plus students who took a studio with another writing course in their first college semester. Students who took a studio course concurrently with developmental education usually had significantly low standardized test scores (for example, single digit ACT scores), low high school grades (D and

Table 4. Outcomes for Writing Studio Students

First Composition Course Taken	Writing Studio Coenroll-ment	# of Students	Successful Completion of Writing Course
ENG 098 (Developmental Writing)	No	583	62%
	Yes	191	85%
	Total	774	68%
ENG 101 (First-Degree Credit Course)	No	1793	70%
	Yes	360	89%
	Total	2153	73%
ENG 102 (Core Writing Requirement)	No	1300	74%
	Yes	122	94%
	Total	1422	76%

F grades in English), or significant gaps in their education. Students who enrolled in the studio with a second semester writing course (English 102) typically had significant learning needs, or they were returning adults with high test scores who had been away from school for many years. The results indicated that students who completed a studio course had a significantly higher course completion rate compared to their peers.

For us, the most compelling part of these findings is that students with multiple placement measures indicating that they might struggle to complete a degree-credit writing course and who had thus enrolled in a studio course had higher success rates in those credit-bearing courses than students who placed directly into those courses without the added studio course. Despite our successes in increasing writing program completion rates for most students in our studio program, we encountered a few challenges in implementing corequisite courses across our institution. Disaggregated institutional data showed that part-time students had lower writing program

completion rates even after we implemented placement changes and writing studio support. We weren't able to develop an effective way to provide part-time students with the same level of corequisite support as students who were on campus full-time although the studio course was effective for part-time students enrolled in it.

Although we both moved on to different positions after we conducted this research, we continue to work on developing placement processes and writing studio courses that support the changing needs of college students and new higher education realities. During the pandemic, Giordano worked with colleagues to develop a writing studio program as part of an institutional acceleration initiative centered on guided self-placement. Participating faculty had to rethink how to structure corequisite support within the context of changed conditions for teaching and learning, which led to the creation of online instructor training, a course development shell to reduce faculty workload, and livestream videoconference course options. Program faculty are still working toward developing a sustainable program within the constraints of our institutional advising and placement practices. During the pandemic, Phillips also developed online instructor training and online writing studio shells for students who needed corequisite support but required more flexibility. Our experiences have taught us that developing an effective corequisite program that addresses barriers to writing course completion and degree attainment is a process that requires ongoing professional engagement, assessment, critical reflection, and revision. Ways for developing writing studio programs need to evolve with changing local circumstances. In both of our programs, instructors are still very much learning how to teach students and support their literacy development in the aftermath of the pandemic.

The Potential of Applying Writing Studio Principles for Post-Pandemic Realities

Several years later, our experiences co-coordinating our program in Wisconsin have continued to be extremely helpful as we adapt pedagogical practices and cocurricular support to new professional environments that have evolved because of the pandemic. One valuable part of our work has been learning how to translate writing studio pedagogy into different contexts. Doing so, we think, has the potential to reach all students, including those who need additional support developing college-level literacies.

The writing studio has been a model for teaching and learning that we have adapted in varied ways across different programs, course structures, and student success initiatives. Writing studio pedagogy creates flexible classroom and online learning spaces that allow instructors to quickly respond to both the broad range of literacy experiences that students bring to college and the rapidly evolving ways in which students use literacy both inside and outside of school. We have learned that we can use studio teaching even when a writing studio isn't available as an enrollment option for students. Principles from writing studio teaching offer postsecondary literacy educators strategies for providing students with equitable and inclusive learning support both within a designated corequisite program and independently in their own classrooms or online learning environments. These principles include moving away from instructor-driven pedagogy and centering teaching on students' individual literacy needs at moments in time and then adapting teaching practices as those needs evolve across a course. As instructors consider how pandemic education has changed their students' learning needs, they can shift their thinking away from predetermined ideas about what students should do and know as college readers and writers. Instead, instructors can focus teaching on where diverse students are in their postsecondary literacy development, including what students are saying about their own experiences with college writing.

Instructors and program coordinators are exploring ways to support student readers and writers in a post-pandemic era in which members of our profession are increasingly questioning traditional approaches to teaching and assessing writing. As part of the process of reimagining how to support students in an age of acceleration and pandemic disruptions, literacy educators might consider flexible ways to adapt the writing studio beyond corequisite support. Perhaps the most important takeaway that we have learned with studio teaching is that all of our community college writers benefit from sustained, individualized support for reading and writing across all of their time in a writing program and not just in a first-semester corequisite course.

In an evolving teaching and learning environment, we offer five examples of how writing instructors might draw from studio teaching to reimagine and change their work as literacy educators beyond corequisite courses:

Use a studio approach to structuring workshops for first-year and sophomore writing courses. We both draw from studio teaching to organize in-class writing workshops for our credit-bearing writing courses. Although we have used this approach for many years, we've strengthened how we use writing

studio pedagogy because students' literacy needs are widely varied in our credit-bearing courses as we emerge from the pandemic. We ask students to plan out their requests for feedback in class (or online at home) before a writing workshop. Students identify the issues that they want to discuss and the questions that they would like to ask their groups. During the workshop, students work with partners or small groups to share their process writing and/or completed drafts based on their requests for feedback. At the end of the workshop, students have time to discuss issues that came up during the workshop with the entire class. They also have time to create a post-workshop plan and to-do list of writing process activities to complete during the next stage of their projects like they would at the end of a writing studio session.

Integrate studio pedagogy into a developmental writing or integrated reading and writing course. We use studio teaching in a more intensive way in developmental courses. Because we work at institutions where students are accelerated to first-year writing through placement, the students who remain in our basic skills courses typically have intensive learning needs or are returning after years away from school. In our face-to-face courses, we incorporate elements of in-the-moment studio teaching into many class periods (Giordano). We reserve flexible time for students to receive individualized instructor help with their writing while students work in small groups to discuss their literacy experiences and share their work. Workshop activities are flexible enough that students who are at earlier stages of a project can work with peers who have fully developed drafts. This approach to writing instruction has been especially important for us as students return to our campuses after the pandemic with very different high school experiences from previous groups of students--and as they continue to miss class because of ongoing medical and employment issues linked to the pandemic. Our classrooms also become sites of writing production that are similar to a writing studio to help students work toward completing planning, researching, and drafting. We use reflective activities that help students identify their own needs as writers and then plan for the work that they will do at home after class.

Create hybrid courses with online learning and in person studio sessions. Giordano developed an emergency integrated reading and writing program during the pandemic. Students completed online learning activities and reading discussions. They then met in person for thirty minutes a week in a very small writing studio group (with limited enrollment because of pandemic restrictions). Some instructors who used this model for emergency pandemic teaching continue offering regular studio time during their in-person classes. In her current hybrid writing courses, Giordano's students

engage in regular in-class workshops that mirror her teaching practices for studio courses, and they also participate in additional asynchronous online workshops and discussions.

Incorporate studio components into a synchronous online course. Giordano uses writing studio activities in some class periods of first-year and sophomore courses that meet virtually through Zoom. Students complete online asynchronous writing process activities to prepare for in-class workshops. They also share their work online before class with the expectation that different learners will be at different stages of a project during a virtual Zoom workshop. Class members identify the issues that they would like to work on together or in small groups for a virtual workshop while students who are absent complete alternative online activities. In first-year writing, Giordano frequently reserves the last fifteen to twenty minutes of class for open-ended workshop time, and students who want help with writing projects stay online to discuss their work, receive help with project planning, and work through challenges with completing writing process activities.

Adapt elements of the writing studio to asynchronous online courses (with limitations). We both regularly teach online writing courses, which are the most challenging learning spaces to incorporate studio teaching methods even as increasing numbers of students are selecting online courses (Weissman). In-the-moment teaching is difficult to implement when students are accessing the course site at different moments across a week. However, we have retained elements of studio teaching in our asynchronous courses. For example, we ask students to make requests for feedback so that online workshops are driven by students' concerns and their needs as writers at a specific week in the course (in contrast to instructor-driven ideas about what should happen in an online workshop style discussion). We also normalize the idea that different writers will bring different work to online workshops. Some students have essay planning or emerging ideas while others have complete drafts. When students can't participate in a workshop with their peers, we offer alternative experiences for receiving feedback and interacting with other writers through a writing center or instructor conference. We give students multiple opportunities to reflect on their literacy experiences and check in with us about their needs at varying times across a course. We don't pretend that our asynchronous workshops and student support make our online courses writing studios. However, our experiences with writing studio teaching have fundamentally transformed how we think about online learning spaces and the diverse individual and collective work that students can do to develop as postsecondary learners while working on writing projects.

A writing studio disrupts traditional conceptions of how writing is taught and learned in higher education, which is both a benefit and a challenge. Some of the challenges that we have experienced in developing writing studio programs include figuring out placement mechanisms, working with advisors in labor-intensive ways, seeking funding for program coordination and faculty development, helping students understand the purpose of the course, training faculty on new ways of teaching, and helping teachers and administrators understand differences between the studio and classroom teaching or writing center work. Barriers to creating and maintaining a corequisite studio program are often locally situated within the constraints of an institution and writing program. Developing a studio program requires cooperation from and collaboration with institutional administrators, advisors, and campus support staff. Further, a writing studio isn't automatically equitable if the instructor doesn't understand and apply the disciplinary theory and practice that create a framework for implementing an equitable studio program. An instructor needs to use inclusive teaching practices that remove barriers to college learning and help them work toward degree attainment. Developing and maintaining equitable and inclusive teaching practices takes time and consistent effort.

The future of equity in writing pedagogy requires flexibility and adaptability due to changing mandates, enrollments, and other educational shifts. Responding to students' needs at particular moments in time can be a strategy for reducing inequities that students experience when their literacy and educational backgrounds aren't aligned with traditional expectations for what happens in a college writing classroom. The writing studio model offers an inclusive approach to student-centered literacy support that can be applied to multiple contexts at institutions with students who have diverse educational experiences and learning needs. As literacy educators, we can't let controversies about developmental education get in the way of interrogating critical issues related to students' literacy. Nor can we ignore the permanent changes to writing programs and higher education that emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic. We invite literacy educators to reimagine writing courses as learning spaces centered on developing students' agency and also as opportunities to learn from students' literacy experiences.

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Crisis as a Catalyst for Change: Supporting Student Success with GSP and ALP During the Pandemic

Ian Golding, Sonja Andrus, Kevin Oberlin, Brenda Refaei, and Anna Hensley

ABSTRACT: *University of Cincinnati Blue Ash College (UCBA) was actively engaged in an Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) pilot when COVID-19 struck, derailing placement measures typically used by the University of Cincinnati (UC) system. COVID-19 lockdowns united stakeholders around initiatives to enact a new placement process that had previously been dismissed because of the inability of incoming students to take ACT/SAT tests, which meant that a new placement process needed to be developed quickly that would work for all colleges in the system. The directed placement process was selected because of its emphasis on student agency and the speed with which it could be developed and implemented. This article examines the complicated factors and considerations in adopting the directed self-placement (called Guided Self- Placement or GSP at the university) across multiple colleges, each with its own range of developmental and first-year composition courses. In addition to enacting a new placement model, UC also saw a sudden growth of students enrolling in the UCBA ALP pilot, which required some explanation to make clear to students. The crisis caused by COVID-19 became a catalyst to create a GSP that supports student agency and expanded the growth of the once-nascent ALP offerings.*

KEYWORDS: *Accelerated Learning Program (ALP); COVID; Directed Self-Placement (DSP); placement; two-year college*

INTRODUCTION

It is difficult to overstate the impact COVID-19 had on every aspect of life. The University of Cincinnati, like the rest of the country, was left to craft its own response to the confusing and expanding crisis, which shuttered nearly all services overnight. During (and due to) this chaotic uncertainty, the Department of English and Communication at Blue Ash College, an open access, regional campus of the University of Cincinnati (UCBA), fundamentally changed how it placed, structured, and taught developmental writing due to institutional shifts and the desire to maintain student success in a wildly unstable period.

But the pandemic also served as a catalyst for advancing numerous student-focused aspects of the composition program. Due to an expan-

sion of immediate needs, the global crisis opened doors for discussion that were previously closed but now seemed not only possible, but pragmatic. The global emergency united disparate stakeholders to craft institutional practices that could be more equitable than the methods in place before COVID-19. The crisis of a global pandemic provided a means to reevaluate and reshape the ways in which students experience college composition. Before the pandemic, Ohio required all high school students to take the ACT/SAT. Students who met minimum scores in English and math were exempt from developmental coursework. When the pandemic disrupted Ohio's "Remediation Free" process and the ACT/SAT requirements were dropped because of the difficulty in safely administering the tests, the university could reexamine an Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) and Guided Self-Placement (GSP) with new urgency. Now that the dust has settled, we have found that the GSP works nicely with the ALP, helping to support students in making solid choices about where to begin their writing journeys in college based upon their own prior learning and experiences, as well as their own confidence levels in their abilities, all while helping to close an equity gap that our program experienced due the prior placement and programming.

Background

While this essay will primarily focus on changes we were able to implement because of the pandemic, we will provide a brief history of the

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University's pre-pandemic efforts to adopt a GSP and Accelerated Learning Program (ALP). Although the main campus and its regional campuses offer the same core composition sequence, each college designs its own curricular approaches to best serve its students. While largely similar, there are fundamental differences as well—for instance, all developmental courses are only taught at regional, open-access colleges. To address these needs, the composition programs at these campuses offer more course options for incoming students who may benefit from extra support for the required first-year composition course. For students enrolling at UCBA, in addition to the credit-bearing English 1001, students can begin with the developmental options of English 0097, English 0099, and the new English 1001 ALP. The developmental course sequence is designed to facilitate students' writing development through two standalone noncredit-bearing courses. The English 0097 course uses an integrated reading and writing approach as an introduction to academic literacies used in college. The English 0099 course helps students critically analyze and respond to texts written for general readers. Both courses are intended to prepare students for the types of reading and writing they will encounter in English 1001. Traditionally, a placement test created by the University Composition Committee (UComp) was used to identify which of the courses—English 0097, English 0099, or English 1001—a student could be expected to pass. This test involved students reading, summarizing, and responding to an expository text and then reflecting on their reading and writing processes. At the end of English 0097 and 0099, students provided portfolios of their work for review by a team of instructors who taught the courses. These portfolios were used to indicate if students were ready to move to the next level course. For students in English 0097, the next course would be another developmental course, English 0099; however, some students in English 0097 were able to produce portfolios that indicated their readiness to place directly into English 1001.

BEFORE COVID-19

The GSP Stalls

Though the composition programs at each campus are largely independent, the University has a long-standing cross-college composition committee, UComp, which coordinates composition placement practices, course outcomes, course policies, and other initiatives affecting composition programs across the institution. The collaborative nature of UComp typically

ensures buy-in for changes to the composition program across departments and colleges. However, the potential overlapping of interests between different department faculty and administrators can stymie changes that are not equally viewed as necessary at all campuses. For instance, based on a program review at UCBA in 2016, prior to COVID-19, we became interested in finding a new placement model to replace the essay-based placement system. Most UComp members did not support the change because of cost and the disruption to a process that was working well for the main campus.

Because of the state's remediation-free promise, students with threshold SAT/ACT scores were exempt from further placement testing, which meant most students admitted to the main campus did not need a placement test. The faculty and administrators were aligned with the opinions noted by Moos and Van Zanen that those scores were "'the easiest and most economical [approach]' in the realm of writing placement" (69). However, the regional campuses, because of their open admissions policies, still needed to conduct placement testing because most of their students either did not meet the threshold SAT/ACT scores or did not take the SAT/ACT.

In the University of Cincinnati's writing placement test prior to COVID-19, students summarized a text, wrote an essay response, and reflected on their writing practices used to complete the test. These placement tests were scored by two placement readers—with discrepant scores going to a third reader—all of whom had been normed by a placement coordinator prior to the testing season. This expensive and time-intensive process denied students clarity and reasoning for their assigned composition classes. Equally problematic, students often submitted responses that were too brief to rate based on the rubric. Although students could take up to five days to complete the assignment, most elected to complete it in a single, short sitting. Furthermore, selecting equitable readings for the test had been fraught. Program reviews indicated that some student populations were disproportionately placed in developmental courses, contributing to faculty concerns with placement.

To the UCBA UComp representatives, a self-placement tool seemed a potential alternative as it would better align with developmental course options, while giving students agency to make their own informed choice of which composition course to take. Similar to Gere et al., we foresaw a model where students, "after evaluating their own background and abilities via answering a series of questions, ... determine which course they should take" (155). Our student-focused goals aligned with Christie Toth, Director of Undergraduate Students at the University of Utah, who reports

in her meta-study of student self-placement, "Many participants also saw DSP as a way to offer students greater control over their own education" (22). Similarly, Royer and Gills feel that self-placement, unlike traditional placement, provides a "sense of rightness" to students "who make their own decisions" (Royer and Gills 65). We also felt that a self-placement system would provide a means for us to improve our program. As Becky L. Caouette states, "In giving students a choice among courses and a choice of courses, the FYW Program created an opportunity for sincere inquiry into how students sequence themselves in and out of first-year writing. This profoundly affects how the Program describes, populates, advertises, and teaches all of its courses" (64). By examining where students are placing themselves, we find it "important to think about what that space looks like and modify our curriculum accordingly" (Hart 100). Ultimately, the UCBA representatives believed that a self-placement model would benefit all stakeholders.

Despite these beliefs at one campus, it was not enough to convince everyone on UComp. The existing placement test was viewed as a valid means of placing students because it had been developed in consultation with composition assessment experts and a validity study had been conducted with its adoption in the early 2000s. Updating it, some felt, would be an expensive and time-consuming undertaking with uncertain benefits. And, in addition to questioning the value and difficulty of installation, concerns were raised regarding student intention. The general fear was that even if the self-placement tool were crafted correctly, students at regional campuses would over-place themselves. In their reflection of their own campus's self-placement, Coleman and Smith note, "A few faculty expressed concerns that students had been empowered to place themselves into courses for which they were not prepared" only to find that, based on success rates, "faculty appeared to underestimate the abilities of their students" (417). Due to the conflicting views between the different campuses, talks of self-placement slipped away in the years before COVID-19.

The ALP Takes Off

Though UCBA's desire for a GSP had stalled in the years before COVID-19, the department began piloting an Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) in 2018 that closely follows the program at the Community College of Baltimore County (Adams et al.). Piloting a new ALP composition course required UComp committee support. Though the new ALP course would

be limited to the regional campuses, all agreed that it seemed worthwhile based on departmental review.

The ALP was important to UCBA because the department was examining ways to improve its developmental writing courses by re-examining outcomes, curriculum, and pedagogical approaches, particularly seeking to address equity issues that program review raised. National studies have found that the more developmental courses students are required to take, the less likely they are to persist in their academic careers (Bailey et al.; Jaggers et al.; Shapiro et al). At UCBA, this was an important issue because ENGL 0099 requires students to complete two courses in separate semesters to finish the required English Composition course, so it presents a potential barrier to student completion. The data at UCBA indicated that only 27.4% of students who enrolled in standalone ENGL 0099 successfully completed ENGL 1001 within 3 semesters. Even students who completed ENGL 0099 with a very high grade tended to struggle to successfully complete ENGL 1001. The department had already redesigned the lowest level course so students could potentially skip the next developmental course and place into English Composition (ENGL 1001), reducing the time to completion of ENGL 1001 for some students. However, when we scrutinized the courses, we recognized potential equity issues. In reviewing our program, we found that our total enrollment of black students in all composition courses in the review period was 27.6% of the total population. However, they represented 67.9% of the enrollment of ENGL 0097, our lowest-level developmental course, and 48.6% of ENGL 0099. This was compared to the white student population of 54.6% total, and 18.9% of the 0097 enrollment and 31.3% of the 0099 enrollment. This seemed, then, to be a clear equity issue related directly to placement. Therefore, we found it essential to implement a model that would help our diverse student population.

UCBA spent two years developing the course and overcoming institutional and logistical hurdles, including a registration system not built to accommodate corequisite classes, finding qualified faculty to staff the ALP sections, and identifying additional class spaces on an already packed campus. Following Adams et al.'s model, ten students placed in English Composition and ten students identified as needing more development were registered in one English Composition course. The ten students identified for support went to another room following English Composition to meet with the same instructor to receive additional instruction.

The first ALP pilot was implemented in 2018-2019, with two sections offered in both semesters. Initial data showed that students successfully

completed the ALP at a comparable rate to the stand-alone ENGL 0099 course, but were, of course, also earning credit for their first-year writing course. Funding from a Strong Start to Finish grant allowed us to host a substantial, full-day summer workshop on the ALP for all full-time and part-time faculty to learn about the ALP program. The initial success of the ALP pilot enabled the department to hire a full-time, tenure-track faculty member to teach within the ALP and increase the number of sections to six ALP sections in Fall 2019.

So, on the eve of the COVID-19 pandemic, the two major composition causes championed by the college were moving in separate directions. The conversation about GSP stalled, but ALP was slowly expanding. And, unless an unexpected once-in-a-lifetime catastrophe were to suddenly shutter the nation, the department was ready to continue this trajectory into the spring 2020 semester and beyond.

COVID-19 CHANGES APPROACHES

Selecting a Placement Model

In March 2020, the university followed the rising national trend and closed. Such shuttering affected every aspect of the university, but a wave of emergencies inundated UCBA. As a regional campus, we needed to find immediate solutions for problems that had a harder impact on our students than on other students across the university, such as how to provide techno-logical access to those who relied on campus equipment, how to support a student population who had lost their employment, and how to immediately transfer our in-person pedagogy to an online model for students who had little experience with online learning. With such crucial day-to-day prob-lems, the composition program was focused initially on survival. But as the COVID-19 crisis continued, these immediate issues gave way to larger and more consequential problems regarding the future of our program. While the remaining weeks of the spring 2020 semester were hastily placed online to maintain a semblance of normalcy, the upcoming fall 2020 semester remained unsolved. COVID-19 closures disrupted SAT and ACT test taking, leading to uneven access for graduating high school students. To address this, the university followed the lead of other institutions making standardized test scores optional (Hubler; Vigdor and Diaz). While most students com-ing for fall 2020 had these scores, future students were not able to take their tests while centers were closed. Without these scores, UC's largest campus

needed a method of affirming college readiness and assessing the writing capabilities of tens of thousands of incoming freshmen—and it needed to be ready before students would begin applying for the next academic year (2021-2022) in five months.

Implementing a self-placement model was not a forgone conclusion. In the period following the ACT/SAT announcement that the tests would not be offered, several options were considered. The initial plan was to expand the essay placement system already used at the regional campuses to cover all incoming students across the university. However, this plan was quickly recognized as unfeasible—if not impossible—due to the limited time and budget. At UCBA, for example, four paid readers worked year-round to assess an average of four hundred essays each, with the majority of that work happening over the summer in preparation for fall enrollment. To cover the entire incoming class would take roughly twenty new readers to evaluate thousands of essays on a shorter timeline. Without a system or funding in place to support that, the interest in adopting new placement practices accelerated quickly.

When UComp discussion began examining alternative methods, UCBA saw an opportunity to reintroduce the idea of the GSP. While the model still maintained its ability to support student agency, it offered a new pragmatic solution: if the system's placement choice was largely self-guided by students, it could efficiently place thousands of incoming individuals without vastly increasing cost and labor, something all the colleges and the administration desired. Moos and Van Zanen note that scholars have found a division on the financial aspect of self-placement, stating that while it can at times "offer financial savings (Gere et al.; Royer and Gilles)," others found the economic impact "negligible" (Blakesley; Toth). However, due to the conditions caused by the pandemic, it provided a viable option due to scope and timeline.

While UComp members were examining a self-placement model, administrators at all three colleges were initially more interested in implementing a system that they viewed as being even more streamlined: a Multiple Measures (MM) model. This model would assess student competencies based on their overall high school GPA and their specific high school English GPA (the belief being that the course-specific GPA was a stronger predictor of a student's ability to succeed in the college-related course), ACT/SAT test scores if present, and state-level graduation tests in relevant subject areas (likely course-level exit exams for high school English). The system would be so streamlined that factors influencing student placement would be de-

termined by algorithm, largely eliminating the English department faculty and readers from the placement process.

UComp deemed the MM placement model inappropriate for the University of Cincinnati because of the difficulty in creating a system capable of pulling the information needed from the University's databases, along with concerns about the equity of MM models. While the Two-Year College Association's 2016 white paper mentions MM alongside DSP as being better than a test (Klausman et al.), and nascent studies on both MM and DSP in community and two-year colleges continue to show varying degrees of predictive, content, and social validity (Bahr et al.; Coleman and Smith; Crusan; Fagioli et al.; Gilman et al., Snyder et al.), UComp members argued against MM for the following reasons.

A number of studies have shown that MM, while leading to similar success rates as DSP, has not been as successful at addressing equity in placement, and, across our campuses, all stakeholders saw equitable placement as a priority. In the case of MM, Klausman and Lynch point out the continued gate-keeping effect of using high school GPAs and test scores and showed instead more demographically proportional placements with similar student success rates with a shift from MM to DSP (Klausman and Lynch, 69-70, 77). UComp was concerned that administrators' interest in MM in the abstract did not take into account the nuances of a diverse student body with multiple, local campuses, much less the need to connect placement practices with pedagogical and curricular ones. In revisiting the "TYCA White Paper on Placement Reform," Hassel and Giordano emphasized that two-year colleges have "a unique local or regional purpose" that problematizes lumping them together as a category of institutions, underscoring the need for placement practices that can respond to the complexity of students' experiences and backgrounds in their locality and further advocated for placement practices "aligned with the curriculum and with the pedagogical approaches used in a program" (Gilman et al. 3, 5). Aull's summary of research in her 2017 introduction to the "Tools and Tech" forum cites numerous scholars who show that, beyond measuring "what it purported to measure," "a writing assessment must include a recognizable and supportable theoretical foundation" and account for "local needs" (Aull, Tools, A3). While MM systems were a potential option in certain environments, the immediate requirement caused by the pandemic left too many unknowns—from accuracy to budget—to be considered at the time.

Furthermore, UComp was concerned that emphasis on the supposed efficiency of MM was based in part on the incorrect assumption that all

developmental courses are necessarily barriers to degree completion at all institutions. Developmental courses, the committee believed, were gateways to navigating college success rather than roadblocks. Similarly, Hassel and Giordano disagreed with the assertion that "developmental courses in general are an obstacle to completing a degree for two-year college students," citing their own research as well as data from a 2017 study by the U. S. Department of Education showing the link between success in developmental courses and degree completion (Gilman et al. 2-3). In the decades since, scholars including Ira Shor and John Trimbur have argued that, while "basic writing" courses are stigmatizing, new approaches to developmental writing (including ALP, stretch, and corequisite courses) have helped improve student success and retention at many institutions, with some researchers arguing that stigmatization—the feeling of not belonging—comes from being unsuccessful in a course as much or more than it comes from placing into a developmental course (Ruecker et al.; Peele 59-60, 63). Even contemporary critics of developmental writing courses advocate for radically reworking approaches to teaching writing, viewing attempts to improve retention efforts by streamlining processes or removing developmental writing courses from four-year institutions (as the state of Ohio has done) as ineffective "retrofits" and erasures that may make the problem of stigmatization worse. Using MM as a way to gloss over or ignore the support students need to succeed in writing courses increases the likelihood of students failing courses and losing their sense of control and agency, the latter of which DSP expressly combats.

After several meetings and discussions, UComp and administrators on all campuses moved to craft a guided self-placement. Despite the differences between each campus, the members recognized the need to collaborate in designing a placement system that would work for all students, while meeting the needs of each college. Following Hassel and Giordano's assertion about placement needing to meet the unique experiences and backgrounds of students, the GSP would be customized for each campus to highlight its offerings.

Because of the urgency of the situation, the university was required to move immediately into a "pilot" that included all UC students in the fall 2021 enrollment window. With online orientation, online enrollment, and mostly online classes, the GSP needed to function as both an introduction to the available courses and as a means for students to select the best option for themselves. And it needed to be ready in four months. With no backup method possible, it *had* to work.

The guided self-placement had the potential to be more inclusive and would be more clearly aligned with the pedagogy that informed how we teach composition courses and would empower students to take responsibility for their coursework. Students could sign up for classes while lowering the stigma of certain writing courses (Caouette). To ensure students placed themselves into courses where they would be successful, the placement needed to look at factors that impact student success beyond reading and writing skill level. Rachel Lewis Ketai explains that "DSP offers the potential to address the racialization of basic writing that too often occurs through traditional placement practices" (141). We wanted to be careful in our construction of the self-placement tool to guide students in their review of the courses and their reflections upon their own prior experiences with reading and writing so that they could more appropriately judge for themselves where they would feel comfortable starting their academic writing journey, while also working to eliminate institutionalized racial injustice and barriers to success, knowing that the basic swap from one placement mechanism to the other was not a fix-all.

UComp Creates the GSP

With the DSP (called Guided Self-Placement or GSP) selected as a feasible process, UComp formed an *ad hoc* committee to plan its implementation during fall of 2020 and charged it with having a pilot in place by mid-January of 2021 for students who would begin taking courses in summer and fall of 2021.

In the subcommittee's initial meetings in October of 2020, it reviewed the literature on self-placement, examined directed self-placement systems being used at institutions across the country, identified important campus stakeholders that would help implement the online system, and drafted rationales. As it reviewed other directed self-placement processes in use, the committee was looking specifically to see what the instruments appeared to measure, how user-friendly they appeared to be, how the technology functioned, and what the level of faculty and staff involvement appeared to be. Each of the campuses brought different needs to the table, which required building an instrument that responded equally well to those needs. The main campus had to privilege a streamlined process with low-levels of faculty and staff involvement to accommodate the thousands of students they would need to see through the process, while the regional campuses had to privilege elements like offering a clear recommendation, describing the numerous

course options in student-friendly language, and providing individualized support that responded to the needs of their unique student populations.

One of the persistent challenges encountered in discussing GSP with administrators, staff, and advisors, was moving away from the language of testing. Previously, all placements at the university did, indeed, use a test in one form or another, but one of the keys in helping students understand the difference between GSP and the previous placement test was replacing the word, "test," which implied a high-stakes evaluation of students' "English" skills. Placement coordinators at the three campuses faced the double problem of getting stakeholders to talk about "placement" instead of "placement testing" and to talk about "writing" instead of "English." This had never been, after all, a placement related to students' proficiency with the English language, a point of concern that had occasionally been raised by colleagues working with incoming international students, who had to keep track of TESOL scores and their implications while also having to deal with "English placement" scores. While no stakeholders were opposed to this shift in language, many saw it initially as a meaningless change in disciplinary jargon. It was not until they were able to review the GSP instrument in progress and how this shift in language helped clarify the placement system to students that they began to see the value in the updated language. This perspective would have been unlikely had it not been for COVID-19, as the evidence was not apparent until the project was underway. However, the timeline and closures caused by the pandemic provided a space to create both new approaches as well as new perspectives.

Given the time constraints, the subcommittee designing the GSP decided to use a form that could be adopted consistently across campuses but modified to reflect the courses offered by each campus. The subcommittee would draft the questions and introductory instructions, which would be the same across campuses, but each campus would create their own support apparatuses tailored to their own campus. This involved bringing in numerous people across English departments to create supplementary materials in multiple modalities, including texts, videos, and infographics.

To provide students with the agency to direct their own learning, the course choices and GSP questions would need to be clear for incoming students. Providing an accurate and equitable placement required ensuring that the questions were appropriate in scope and aligned with course and program outcomes. The subcommittee initially considered questions that covered general study skills, reading skills, writing skills, exposure to typical assignments, technology skills, previous writing experiences, collaborative

skills, motivation, and ability to seek help. The committee agreed that the assessment had to account for what Manuel Piña describes as the "dispositional habitus that students bring with them to the placement decision" (17), as well as skills-based elements to serve the purposes both students and programs needed served. It would have to be relatively brief to satisfy students, who only had so much time, and administrators, who wanted to ensure that enrollment processes didn't become obstacles to admission, while still getting at enough information and reflection to be authentic enough to help students understand the courses and their own learning and writing histories to make a choice in their own best interests. So, the instrument was revised over the course of a couple of weeks, narrowing it to questions addressing students' perceptions of their past writing experiences, comfort level with reading and writing tasks, general study skills, and willingness to seek support. In the following week, about a dozen draft questions were circulated for feedback among faculty and student representatives from the three English departments. While this process resulted in narrowing the list of questions down to 10, with pressure from some levels of administration to get the GSP down to a single question, the subcommittee eventually winnowed it down to 8 questions, with five related to writing experiences, and one in each of the other categories. The process of developing the questions and revising them with feedback from stakeholders took about a month and was concurrent with designing the layout of the instrument itself.

Challenges Creating the GSP

Throughout the development process the subcommittee was forced to balance ideal practice with available technology. The placement model used prior to the GSP was streamlined in a manner that would make it difficult to simply swap in a new system. Originally, students were emailed instructions on how to access the material. They would have until the deadline to read a selected article and write a response. If requested, students could also take the placement test in person. For the sake of admissions and advisors, all placement tests needed to be scored before the student attended an orientation session.

In determining what platform should be used to host the GSP, UComp needed to consider user-friendliness, data security, and flexibility of modalities as primary concerns. Unfortunately, there was no software that met expectations for all three categories that would not have cost the university additional funds. Ultimately the more data-secure, already-paid-for system

was selected despite reducing user-friendliness. The platform was initially selected to host the traditional placement model rather than a system where students interacted with the materials to select an option best suited for themselves. Because of this, the student experience required additional clicks, and support materials could not be embedded. Instructional videos, for example, appeared in unintuitive locations, and the sample reading had to be hosted on another site. The forms could neither tabulate students' responses nor allow design choices that would help clarify hierarchies of information. Despite these drawbacks, the committee felt that it was possible to carefully construct a GSP that helped explain to students the necessary steps needed to select the right course for them.

With the platform selected, the GSP began to take shape. As students completed their pre-enrollment process, they would be guided to take the placement survey. Unlike the previous model, the GSP was an interactive process for students selecting the course that they felt best for their success. Students first entered a splash page welcoming them to the GSP and explaining—through video—the importance of, and agency provided by, the process. There was also an additional video embedded to explain the different classes in the composition sequence. Following this, they would answer the questions based on their own experiences. Upon completing the survey, students would be suggested a course based on their answers. Selecting the course, however, had to be done by the student because the platform itself was unable to tabulate the answers and recommend a corresponding class. The placement coordinator worried that this might lead to discrepancies in the courses selected, but we had to wait until the placements started to find out.

Early in the process, the committee found that the system also provided ample hurdles for faculty as well. The data collected through the GSP could not be automatically transferred to the IT systems that contained admissions data and student records, which had been a perpetual issue with the previous placement system, as well: scores from one system had to be manually transferred in batches to the IT systems where they would be accessed by stakeholders. In theory, GSP was an opportunity to correct this problem. After meeting with a range of stakeholders and experts, including college deans, administrative department heads, and IT staff, it was concluded that the onerous workarounds; which involved each college's English, admissions, and sometimes IT departments; would have to continue. As such, the GSP would not eliminate the cross-departmental labor despite "streamlining" certain aspects.

As the GSP plan was finalized in December, it was presented to multiple administrators for review, including UComp, college curriculum committees, admissions offices, and advising. UComp representatives from the regional campuses gave presentations to advisors in particular to support their work scheduling students during orientation. Despite the sizeable number of stakeholders involved, and the reservations put forward particularly by administrators and advisors that students might take advantage of the system to over-place themselves, the pilot was ready to launch in January.

AFTER GSP IMPLEMENTATION

Once complete, the GSP was disseminated to students through emails from admissions, connected variously with the placement web pages at each college and, in the case of one campus, a Canvas portal. When the placement went live, the workload of the department expanded as we supported prospective students navigating the new placement system. Because the outcome was unknown, early student responses were closely observed. As anticipated, the writing placement coordinator noticed discrepancies with some of the student choices. A small but noticeable number of students placed themselves in classes incongruous with their answers in the GSP. Though misplacement had been a previously stated concern since the earliest pre-COVID-19 discussion of self-placement, the outcome was reversed: more students appeared to under-place themselves than over-place themselves, disregarding their answers on the survey about their adequate level of preparedness and instead placing themselves in a course lower than the course suggested by their answers.

Most students potentially misplacing themselves were isolated to regional campuses where the composition course offerings were more diverse. With some students potentially under-placing themselves, the placement coordinator at UCBA developed a plan to intervene and to understand how the GSP might be improved. Previous assessment readers volunteered to shift their role to outreach. Each week, these faculty members reached out to these students over email, text, and phone, initiating conversations to discuss the students' decisions and clarify their options. Over the course of the summer, the outreach system contacted approximately 360 UCBA students. When the placement outreach workers spoke to students, the goal was not to challenge the choices students had made but to ensure they had selected the best option based on their needs and answers. Through these calls, we found that students placed themselves in potentially incorrect classes for

several reasons: some of them second-guessed their preparedness despite how the GSP questions rated it because of overall anxiety about their writing skills and ability to manage college courses and workloads. Others misinterpreted the goal of developmental writing and thought they needed to "start at the beginning" of the sequence. Others still miscalculated the number of responses they gave, and thus followed an incorrect recommendation. In addition to supporting student choices, the calls were also an opportunity to give a personal approach to college enrollment. Because the vast majority of the college onboarding process was online and because students are generally required to complete placements before orientation, these mid-summer calls were some of the first communications students received through the university. The calls then became a means to welcome students and show not only that their choices were respected, but also that the university cared.

In the semesters since, the GSP has been tweaked multiple times to ensure equivalence across campuses and to provide context related to the type of support being offered at each campus, but the content has remained consistent as data collection continues.

ALP AND TEACHING

The implementation of the GSP gave students a choice in the composition course they viewed as best for them. Due to COVID-19, students entered with varying levels of learning loss and with increased responsibilities and rates of depression and anxiety—all factors that may result in more students who desire additional support and structure for their learning. Indeed, students were seeking additional, intensive support as they began their studies.

The most dramatic change we saw was a vast expansion of the ALP courses. Students taking the GSP selected enrollment in this course in numbers far beyond what had been initially offered in our previous placement model. Prior to the pandemic, the ALP was growing at a rate that faculty felt best suited our resources. Each semester, we would offer new sections that balanced the results of our placement readings and the number of available educators. However, once the GSP began, the number of courses needed was in many ways set by student choice. And, to our surprise, the number of students who selected the ALP section skyrocketed. As such, we saw the demand for ALP expanded rapidly, from six sections in fall 2020 to nineteen in fall 2021.

In addition to the increased number of sections, the ALP expanded modality to meet new student needs during the pandemic. The course was

now offered face-to-face, fully online (in both synchronous and asynchronous formats), and in hybrid models. In many ways, these choices were made due to uncertainty caused by COVID-19, and the department elected for an approach that would provide the utmost flexibility for student needs. However, such varied options created potential difficulties for educators to meet the wide array of potential teaching modes.

This quick expansion, both of additional sections and additional modalities, placed immediate stressors on hiring. Though originally taught at a rate that was easy to staff with the interested and trained faculty we had, with GSP we immediately needed more faculty to staff burgeoning ALP sections. Our filtering and interviewing practices for hiring part-time faculty had to shift very quickly. We were suddenly looking for faculty who had experience with corequisite models of teaching, of course, but also faculty who could quickly train and buy into the model of corequisite writing instruction that ALP uses, as well as be ready to take on the more rigorous instruction required in our English Composition course, which is not necessarily like the first-year composition course in colleges that many of our applicants had prior experience with. (And we needed them to be able to manage all of this online in many cases.) Describing the ALP to interviewees and inquiring about their interest in teaching in such a program became standard practice, as did reviewing transcripts and teaching experience for indications of compatibility for working with the diversity of learning profiles present in the classes.

Because of the significant changes brought by the pandemic, assessment models that attempt to compare our current data with past data reflecting a radically different landscape are wholly inadequate. The student success data indicates that ALP is more successful at helping students complete ENGL 1001 than standalone ENGL 0099. For students who need developmental support, those enrolled in ALP complete their ENGL 1001 at a rate of 46.4%—far higher than the rate of success of standalone ENGL 0099 (27.4%). When the two harshest pandemic semesters are removed from the data, the total success rate for the ALP remains at 64.3%, despite the various trials students face during this ongoing challenging time. We can see that ALP and GSP are working together because we see the equity gap closing in the numbers of minority students placing themselves into ENGL 1001 and ENGL 1001C (ALP) and finishing successfully in one semester under GSP. We also believe that ALP is meeting the needs of students who would typically place by test or might otherwise choose a developmental course such as 0099 or 0097 to successfully complete ENGL 1001 within a single semester, as evidenced by the data discussed earlier.

Given the demand for the ALP and the difficulty staffing ALP sections, UCBA was awarded money through a University Strategic Sizing Grant initiative to hire a new full-time, tenure-track faculty member to teach in the ALP starting in fall 2022.

CLOSING

The emergency needs caused by the pandemic united stakeholders to enact advancements that were previously dismissed. The outcome is a GSP that supports student agency and the expansive growth of the once-nascent ALP offering.

The data we've reviewed indicates that ALP alone was helping to address the equity gap, but together, ALP and GSP are working to address equity issues through multiple angles. ALP and GSP address successful completion concerns and equity issues by providing opportunities for students to determine their own progress through their educational careers. GSP supports students in selecting a writing course that will extend their writing skills based on where they are right now, as they begin their educational journey, while the ALP course gives students the opportunity to complete a college level course when they might not otherwise attempt it without the additional support available.

Though some stakeholders had long petitioned for these changes, the conversation was not fully considered until the change offered pragmatic solutions to an unforeseeable, immediate catastrophe. The reasoning behind the sudden UComp endorsement of GSP did not undermine its philosophical goal, rather it served as a catalyst to bring the various stakeholders to a conversation that had previously felt unnecessary.

But seizing the crisis moment of the pandemic to institute these necessary changes has not been without its costs. Being in a situation where GSP "had to work" has resulted in several issues (issues with admissions and advising, technical issues with data entry and transfer between systems, etc.). The drastic increase in demand for the ALP, which came with the switch to the GSP, has continued to create staffing issues, which have only been exaggerated by the same hiring and retention difficulties plaguing so many industries in this post-pandemic moment. Forecasting course needs for scheduling purposes remains incredibly difficult. While instituting the GSP prior to the pandemic would have been difficult and would have presented many of the same challenges, making those changes without the pressure

of an immediate crisis would have allowed for more time to think through issues and develop more sustainable solutions.

It was perhaps easier prior to 2020 to take periods of relative stability for granted and put off difficult but necessary changes. All departments face inertia, and while we had wanted to move our placement from the test to guided self-placement prior to the pandemic, inertia had kept many stakeholders from seeing the need for change or the value of a new system. The COVID-19 crisis required all stakeholders to think creatively about how to solve the problem with placement testing, providing us with the perfect opportunity to suggest guided self-placement once again. Though a traumatic period on a global, communal, and personal level, the pandemic did not stop volunteers from coming together to create a new placement process and ALP that both met everyone's needs and was mindful of costs and student agency.

Based on our experiences, faculty who would like to argue for changes at their institutions prior to moments of crisis should consider bringing in current research on how their desired approach supports student success in particular. This research can provide guidance as changes are designed and implemented. It is also important to find other stakeholders to create a collaborative relationship to address the area of concern. Involving other stakeholders increases the likelihood of successful adoption of the change being considered. We also suggest taking a close look at how the initiative ties into the institution's strategic plan. Many times, the strategic plan will have a DEI component that placement revision can be positioned into. And keep in mind that transitioning between approaches may require less monetary support than initially anticipated, especially if people are willing to be creative with their resources.

As we find ourselves reflecting on the vast advancements our composition program enacted during a brief and stressful timeline, we hope in the future that all stakeholders (including ourselves) remember how easily these moments of relative stability can be upended, while remaining optimistic about their own adaptability and resilience.

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Rebooting ALP

Tara Coleman and Jacqueline Jones

ABSTRACT: *The COVID-19 pandemic placed particular strains on course models such as the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP), which emphasize small group learning and individualized support for students. While many of the resulting challenges, particularly those related to student engagement, have been shared by program leaders and faculty around the country, this reflective essay discusses how our writing program responded to these challenges by drawing on an existing culture of professional development along with emerging assessment practices. In a period of rapid change brought about by not only COVID-19, but also a host of other institutional, demographic and socio-political factors, we emphasize the need to guide ALP faculty in deepening their understanding of how the work we do with students is influenced by a broader context. In the essay, we show how our experience coleading a year of professional development sessions focused on next steps for our ALP course, combined with new approaches to programmatic assessment, have led to a shift in how we approach curricular and pedagogical interventions. As we attempt to move from the pandemic era of reactive problem-solving to a more proactive focus on long-term structural changes, we argue that the sustainability of ALP in the long term requires faculty to be prepared to adjust to changing circumstances while remaining grounded in the core tenets of the model.*

KEYWORDS: *Accelerated Learning Program (ALP); COVID-19; critical reading; inquiry-based learning; professional development; writing program assessment*

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic arrived at a particularly pivotal moment of transition for the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) writing course at our institution, LaGuardia Community College, part of the City University of New York (CUNY). We began offering ALP courses in 2011, and quickly scaled up from four sections to over 20 in 2014 (see Johnsen). In 2018, our program conducted a full-scale revision of the course in response to the (most welcome) elimination of a CUNY-mandated exit exam for developmental students, a change which allowed us to spend all our additional time with students on authentic composition skills. Along with many of the other colleges nationwide who adopted this model, we found that the course had a positive impact on student success. Prior to the pandemic, students enrolled in our ALP course routinely passed at a similar rate to students enrolled in our first-semester writing course, and at a much higher rate than students who took our standalone developmental writing course. Furthermore, ALP students passed the next composition course in our sequence at a higher rate

than students who passed our first-semester writing course (see tables 1 and 2). By 2019, due to the success of programs like ours within the system, as well as the national push to end traditional remediation, CUNY announced a phase-out of all non-credit-bearing remedial courses in math, reading, and writing ("Technical Guidance Memorandum OAA 20-01"). This change meant that our ALP course needed to make two major adjustments: 1) expand support for reading skills, now that remedial reading courses would no longer be offered, and 2) prepare to serve not only upper-level developmental students but all entering students (except those placed into our English as a Second Language program courses).[1] Just before the COVID-19 pandemic hit in the winter of 2020, we were approaching a decade of work on this course and looking for ways to ensure its sustainability long-term while considering what impact these major shifts in its function at the university should have on our approach to teaching and administering it.

As we will describe in this reflection, during the turbulent semesters in which our courses were conducted in distance learning, Spring 2020 through most of Fall 2021, we were able to draw on our existing culture of professional development, as well as emerging assessment practices, to guide our response. The pandemic caused us to rethink several aspects of our ALP curriculum and pedagogy, emerging most cogently in a series of professional development "reboot" seminars we coled in the 2021-2022 academic year to prepare for the so-called "post-pandemic" version of this course. The "reboot" seminar and other initiatives in our writing program have further clarified the reality that the pandemic's impacts on our students intersect with structural changes that directly preceded it. Rather than returning to a period of stability, ALP teaching appears likely to require frequent adapta-

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tion and flexibility for the foreseeable future. In response, we argue that as researchers and teachers, we should develop models for sustainability in ALP programs, guided by scholars of programs like WAC, which can be similarly subject to changing institutional tides (e.g. Cox, Galin, and Meltzer). In 2021, when we began conceptualizing "rebooting" our ALP course, we thought the structural changes and challenges we were experiencing required us to make significant changes to our pedagogy and potentially overall curriculum for the course. Ultimately, the "reboot" seminar and the initiatives we have engaged in thereafter have led to a more measured, slow-burn response, in which we have reaffirmed core features of the course while initiating assessment in areas of particular concern. For us, sustainable ALP involves a combination of targeted, ongoing professional development and flexible assessment practices that enable us to respond to changes in students' needs and institutional policies over time.

Shifting Professional Development During the Pandemic

In the years leading up to the pandemic, professional development in our ALP course focused primarily on orienting faculty to the accelerated model and to our department's pedagogical framework for ALP. The course, ENA101: Accelerated Composition I, is directly modeled on the Community College of Baltimore County program (Adams et al.).[2] ENA 101 meets for seven hours per week, consisting of four hours in which ten students placed in developmental writing take ENG101: Composition I with twelve students directly placed into the course. The developmental writing student cohort also receives three additional hours of support per week. Instructors teach all seven hours of the course and use the additional hours to deepen students' integration of reading and writing, improve critical thinking skills, and re-spond to affective issues. Instructors are also highly encouraged to use this time to decelerate learning by reviewing material already covered in ENG 101 or previewing upcoming lessons or materials. In 2018, our then-ALP coordinator, J. Elizabeth Clark, took advantage of the opening created by the elimination of the exit exam to lead a professional development seminar that created a pedagogical framework of eight core features which define our program's ENA101 pedagogy ("Teaching with the ENA101 Framework"). The yearlong effort culminated in a formal curriculum revision that included three course objectives specific to ENA101 in addition to the Composition I course objectives:

1. Provide students with individualized support and practice throughout all phases of the writing process to ensure the development of college-level writing skills to be successful in English 101.

2. Reinforce the reading and writing opportunities provided in English 101.

3. Provide students with additional time to develop a deeper understanding of the recursive writing process necessary for college composition.

To integrate these revisions into classroom practice, the program offered several rounds of paid professional development including, for the first time, paid seminars for adjunct faculty.[3] In addition to training faculty in both the practical aspects of teaching this course and the principles of our ENA Framework, these pre-pandemic professional development sessions heavily emphasized the importance of using the additional time provided by the ALP model to address the affective domain of writing instruction.[4] Such activities included developing lessons or low-stakes assignments to help students navigate writing anxiety, sharing strategies from the emerging CUNY-wide work on learning mindsets, guiding students through the transition to college, and cultivating a sense of community in the small group.

These professional development seminars continued through the beginning of the pandemic and offered a space for faculty to support each other and our students as we all navigated life at the "epicenter of the epicenter" of the COVID-19 outbreak in Queens, New York (see e.g. McVane). During these first semesters of distance learning in 2020, our extensive pre-pandemic conversations about the affective dimension of learning served us well. Faculty were able to apply their techniques for addressing the student as a whole person to all their courses, not just ALP. And even though our ALP faculty had only met their ENA101 students once or twice before moving online in Spring 2020 (due to our unusual academic calendar), many faculty reported that their ENA101 students navigated the transition to distance learning more successfully than their English 101 peers, perhaps because they had already established a sense of connection with their professor in those initial small group meetings.

However, in the ensuing semesters of distance learning, we began to grapple with the twin challenges of steeply declining enrollment and higher withdrawal and failure rates. The removal of tests such as the SAT or ACT from the placement process, and at the time an incomplete transition to a new ESL placement model at CUNY, created uncertainty around the paths

students took into our courses. During this period, we and our fellow Writing Program Administrators[5] implemented a range of professional development opportunities for instructors teaching courses across the program, from faculty support pods and distance learning workshops to one-on-one troubleshooting and brainstorming support. Faculty members developed many creative ways of engaging students in both synchronous and asynchronous online writing courses. But as we looked ahead to the return to campus in Fall 2021, it was clear that we needed to not only address the deep emotional scars that the COVID-19 pandemic had left on all of us, especially the more vulnerable among our students, but also think more comprehensively about the many ways – not limited to those caused by the pandemic – in which our ALP course was no longer operating in the same institutional framework as it had been just two years before.

One major structural change, the elimination of remedial reading courses and the shift to a single placement score rather than separate measures for reading and writing, had, along with the pandemic, created a strong need for greater attention to critical reading skills. Faculty were reporting anecdotally that students were struggling to complete assigned readings, even though many had cut back on the amount of assigned reading during the pandemic, and that some students were struggling to understand texts that had never presented such a challenge prior to the pandemic; as such, we made critical reading skills one of the major goals of the next round of professional development. The other area of greatest need we identified came out of our assessment of student artifacts. LaGuardia's general education assessment evaluates students' work through three core competencies: Inquiry and Problem Solving (IPS), Global Learning, and Integrative Learning. In 2019, we changed the targeted competency for our Composition I course to IPS, which measures students' ability to frame issues, gather evidence, analyze, and then draw conclusions. This competency strongly aligns with one of our two program-specific learning outcomes, related to students' ability to integrate and synthesize sources in their writing. We had just begun to assess this programmatic learning outcome during the winter of 2020, and were somewhat surprised to see that students were coming quite close to meeting our benchmark expectations during distance learning. Additionally, the collegewide general education assessment showed that after a dip in the spring and fall of 2020, students were bouncing back in their work around IPS in 2021.

However, both rounds of assessment revealed that more work could be done with assignment design. We were aware that not all faculty had

adjusted their Composition I assignments to target the goals of IPS, as distance learning had disrupted our ability to implement that recent curricular change. Additionally, our programmatic assessment, which looks at faculty assignment instructions alongside student work, gave us insight into ways our faculty could better guide students in understanding the goals of research-based writing and in navigating the different stages of the research process. More broadly, we suspected that challenges with assigned readings and with the staged research-based assignment at the end of the semester could be playing a significant role in the elevated withdrawal rate for ENA101 students since the COVID-19 pandemic (see table 3). We hoped that supporting students in these two key areas would encourage them to at least pursue the class until the end, rather than get frustrated and drop out. We decided to use this new phase of professional development to integrate more mindfully what we were learning through these various forms of assessment into our ENA101 curriculum.

Without realizing it at the time, this represented a meaningful shift in how we approach professional development for ENA101. In the early days of ALP at LaGuardia, the course represented an experimental alternative to our traditional composition sequence, so it was administered and assessed separately from our other courses. We emerged from the pandemic in a very different set of circumstances: most of our faculty had now been trained to teach ENA101 and CUNY's remediation reforms had entrenched our ALP course as the primary placement for incoming students with developmental needs. The result was that ENA101 now functioned as the foundation of our writing program, the place from which many of our key pedagogical principles and strategies emerged. What we decided to call the ENA101 "reboot" seminar reflected this important solidification of the course's role in the program, and served as an opportunity to help faculty reflect on what this new phase of ALP meant—for us as teachers, for our students, and for our entire program.

ENA Reboot

Two cohorts of faculty participated in the ENA101 "reboot" seminar during the 2021-2022 academic year—one in the fall, and one in the spring. The seminar gave faculty the opportunity to brainstorm ways of responding to pandemic-related challenges in the course, such as student disengagement, while also taking a close look at policy and curricular changes that had preceded the pandemic and had not been fully addressed due to the

disruption caused by distance learning. To do this, the first session of both the fall and spring seminars included a comprehensive overview of all the changes our ALP course has experienced over the last decade (as discussed in the previous section). Changes discussed included: removal of remedial reading courses and reading placement measures, introduction of the Placement Index, course curricular revisions, the impact of the pandemic on student attendance and engagement, and how the university's focus on increasing graduation rates while decreasing time to degree influences students' willingness or availability to engage in the type of intensive learning that an ALP course requires. One topic that sparked the most interest among participants was the need to integrate critical reading and writing pedagogies, which continues to be of interest to our faculty since the "reboot" seminars. Our goal in structuring the "reboot" seminar was to first encourage participants to share observations about what they were seeing and then guide them toward a more comprehensive response by designing a curricular project targeted to one of the challenges the group identified. These projects were later shared with colleagues in the program on our writing program website. As we are a fairly large department (over 100 members, made up of roughly two-thirds full-time, and one-third part-time faculty), with fluctuating resources to fund professional development and varying abilities to commit to a semester-long seminar, sharing outcomes of our professional development initiatives in department meetings, workshops, and on our writing program website are important methods we use to engage as many members of our department as possible in program conversations about pedagogy and changes to our curriculum. In addition to discussing new teaching strategies and creating a curricular project to address the "post"-pandemic needs of our students, the seminar asked faculty to specifically re-consider the design of one of their staged, inquiry-based writing assignments, to address the needs identified through assessment.

The "reboot" seminar re-affirmed the core components of our ALP pedagogy, namely: 1) providing students with extensive individualized guidance; 2) developing peer relationships between students in the cohort model to support their sense of belonging and engagement; and 3) paying attention to affective concerns around reading and writing, as well as the development of habits of mind that will enable students to succeed in future college courses more broadly. Given the changes that have taken place since we first designed and then re-designed the class, it is important for us, collectively, to continue to reinforce these core values to ensure they are protected within our turbulent instructional environment. Yet unsurpris-

ingly, the "post"-pandemic challenges loomed large in conversations among both the fall and spring cohorts of our "reboot" seminar. While many faculty members envisioned that the return to campus would precipitate a reversal of the learning loss and challenging student behavior that emerged during distance learning, the reality turned out to be much harder and more complicated than imagined. Some faculty perceived that the gap in skill sets between students placed in Composition I and ENA101 had widened; while other faculty perceived that there were students in their ENG 101 courses that would be better served through ENA 101, and a few students in their ENA 101 courses that should have been directly placed into ENG 101. Awareness of these circumstances were leading some faculty to not only change the material covered during small group sessions, but also rethink what activities they could conduct in combined Composition I class sessions. Faculty were noting that compared to pre-pandemic attendance patterns, more ENA101 students were not attending small group sessions regularly or were coming significantly late and/or leaving early. There were also more ENA101 students who were attending class but not turning in assignments. Overall, even though our ENA101 course is designed to help support students in working through any affective issues that might be impacting their success in Composition I (and certainly many students were telling us about serious mental health concerns and challenges in their personal lives that made studying after the pandemic difficult), it seemed that we were facing a unique challenge with ENA101 students precisely because of the intensive nature of the course. The expectations held by many of the students who had graduated high school during the pandemic about what is required to successfully engage in a college writing course, let alone an accelerated one, were a formidable barrier.

Allowing faculty the space to process these "post"-pandemic challenges was an important part of the "reboot" seminar, but our primary goal was to shift our stance as both individual instructors and as a program, from being reactive to proactive. In our conversations, we prompted participants to take a step back from the problem-solving, unceasingly adaptive mode we had all been in since the start of the pandemic to consider how a number of policy and curricular changes at the university, college, and programmatic levels were also playing a role. By doing so, we hoped that rather than throwing every creative idea we could think of at the problem to see what sticks, we could identify targeted areas where we could begin to identify structural changes that may be needed for the course long-term. From an administrative standpoint, we similarly recognized the need to shift from a stance in

which we were constantly preparing to defend an experimental intervention against potential budget-motivated elimination, using the outcomes measures which are most meaningful to administrators, to one in which we proactively identified what the course's role should be in this new educational landscape and what types of assessment would best inform that work.

Seminar Outcomes

Our work in the "reboot" seminar revealed a need for ongoing support in designing inquiry-based writing assignments that aligned with institutional general education assessment goals. It was clear from our work with participants in the seminar that many faculty members were working in class with students to deconstruct, explain, and practice inquiry skills; our review of the IPS assignments faculty submitted for the seminar, however, showed that sometimes assignment instructions were less clear about the particular line of inquiry students were expected to develop and/or the steps for doing so. As seminar leaders, we provided feedback on participants' assignments, encouraging faculty to reinforce in-class guidance in their assignment prompts as well as to be more intentional in guiding students to frame a question or problem themselves (within a set of issues being discussed in class), rather than simply answering a faculty member's question. This is part of a longer-term effort across the writing program to reinforce principles of effective assignment design, with special attention being paid to how we construct and scaffold these IPS assignments.

In addition to working on IPS assignments, we asked faculty participants to target the curricular projects they designed to fill in gaps they noticed in our program's current instructional materials and to ensure that whatever they created would be useful to instructors across the program (i.e. they would not be specific to a single faculty member's course theme). In response to the broadened need for critical reading support some faculty have observed, several participants chose to develop materials related to teaching critical reading, which was one of the goals of the seminar. We used Peter Adams's article "Pedagogical Evolution" as a starting point, because it not only traces his gradual adoption of an integrated reading and writing approach for ALP, but also includes a detailed description of how reading and writing activities are sequenced in his course. The article inspired some faculty to more intentionally stage and contextualize reading assignments for students, while gradually integrating them into the writing process. Other participants chose to focus on areas such as note-taking or class engagement.

One important lesson which emerged from this professional development seminar for us as coleaders was that not all our colleagues are equally prepared for (or interested in) thinking beyond their individual classroom practice. While faculty members in our department have largely been supportive of our transition to conceptualizing and administering our sequence of composition courses as a writing program, only some of the projects which emerged from the "reboot" seminar were specifically targeted to the institutional changes and challenges that we had identified as the focal point of the seminars. We observed that faculty members who were (or had previously been) in leadership roles in various initiatives in the writing program were more comfortable framing their project as a curricular intervention to address one of the concerns that had been discussed. For example, some of those faculty members designed a staged, integrated reading and writing sequence of assignments that could be a model for colleagues interested in enhancing their reading pedagogy. Other colleagues, meanwhile, were more focused on designing activities that addressed their own individual interests for their classrooms. While valuable in themselves, these projects tended to align with our pre-pandemic pedagogical framework for the course (such as the focus on the affective domain of learning, or on preparing students exiting ENA101 for their next course in the composition sequence) rather than aiming to address new challenges. This is understandable, as faculty members often sign up for professional development opportunities either to be "trained" in a new course or pedagogical approach, or to get ideas about what other colleagues are doing. Our professional development initiatives have less often asked colleagues to do programmatic, strategic thinking or to design course materials with a broader audience in mind. This "reboot" seminar reflects our attempt to begin to engage instructors across the program—both adjuncts and full-timers—in a conversation about how the broader context (at the college, at CUNY, and in higher education more broadly) impacts our work in the classroom, because we feel that an institutionally-aware perspective will be essential for our faculty to develop the adaptability needed for teaching ALP students into the future.

Rebooting ALP Assessment

In the face of persistent pandemic-era challenges, particularly around student attendance and engagement, and stemming in part from our "reboot" conversation, we have begun to think differently about how we identify areas of need for curriculum and professional development. The

overall pass rate of our ENA101 course has been improving over the three semesters since we returned to primary in-person instruction, though it has not yet reached its pre-COVID rate (see table 3).[6] One key issue appears to be unofficial withdrawals, or students who essentially disappear long before the end of the semester. Unofficial withdrawal grades rose during the pandemic and remain persistently high, while the percentage of students who fail despite making it to the end of the semester has been fairly consistent. This leaves us with a question: to what extent is the course itself failing to meet the needs of our current students, and to what extent are factors external to the course the primary cause of this change? In other words, should we focus our attention on curricular and pedagogical reforms, or on working with students and the institution to help students navigate those challenges which may be preventing them from engaging with the course as designed?

To help us begin to explore this question, in the spring of 2023 our program piloted a new approach to assessing our ALP course, focused on gathering more information on the interconnected set of issues impacting our students' success. Rather than assessing student work in the course in isolation, this assessment looked at student outcomes alongside indicators of student engagement (e.g. turning in work, attending class, participating in classwork or discussions), as well as a set of habits of mind that we know are crucial to long-term student success. The assessment also combined faculty reporting on these factors for each student with pre- and post-surveys taken by students in which they describe their expectations for the class, experiences with reading and writing tasks, sense of their own commitment to it, etc. This approach aimed to identify the primary factors pushing down course completion rates, information which can be used to target our interventions more effectively.

Although the data from the first round of this assessment is currently being analyzed by project leads Neil Meyer and J. Elizabeth Clark, the preliminary results show a range of different experiences in the course, without a clear shared challenge. Overall, faculty reported participation in class discussions and writing assignments at higher rates than we expected based on what we had heard through professional development conversations in previous semesters. Many students reported gaining a lot from the course, and even some students who struggled to understand or meet the expectations at the beginning of the semester were able to adjust and succeed. For those who struggled, inconsistent attendance was a leading factor, but even that was not the case across the board. Some students attend regularly but do not submit work, others submit work but do not revise when given the op-

portunity or seek out help from resources on campus like the Writing Center. Even among the students who do struggle to attend class regularly, a range of factors come into play, from things that instructors can help address (e.g. lack of interest or sense of connection to the course material) to those which are more challenging (e.g. parental obligations). Notably, there was almost no distinction, in terms of the prevalence of these challenges, between the ALP students and those in first-year composition. Recent institutional data likewise shows that the placement index score has had little correlation to actual student outcomes in first-year composition.

Going forward, as we search for support to continue this work, our preliminary findings suggest that even though our ALP course has always emphasized individualized guidance, instructors will need ongoing professional development as they continue to find new ways to address the increasing heterogeneity of student needs and levels of preparation within each class section. Some adjustments may need to be made to the way we use time in our ALP sessions as well, such as by focusing more on habits of mind and connecting to college in the early weeks, and only diving deeply into writing skills later in the course. Finally, during the 2023-2024 academic year, grant funding allowed the program to pilot an intervention offering "mainstream" first-year writing students supplemental lab hours with a faculty member focused on reading, writing and/or study skills. The intervention was a recognition of the fact that our incoming students face similar challenges across the board.[7] While this temporary intervention did not garner as much student participation as we had hoped, it provided further evidence of the need for rethinking how we support students moving forward. The goal of this intervention was to provide some of the benefits of the ALP model—small group instruction, community building, and supplemental skill development with a faculty member—to students who were not placed into ENA101 but could have used the extra support. However, much like our assessment of the course in the spring of 2023, this effort revealed that our students face a greater number and range of challenges than this type of instructional support model could address.

Conclusion

The changes affecting our ALP course at LaGuardia in recent years have been just as sweeping as they are rapid. The simultaneous arrival of the pandemic and major structural changes to the course at the institutional and programmatic level have made it nearly impossible to determine

which causes are tied to which effects on our students and their learning. Analyzing quantitative data provides an opportunity to contextualize the individualized perspectives of faculty members within broader trends in the program and over time. At the same time, the insights which we have gathered through deep conversations about pedagogy in professional development seminars, as well as other initiatives within the program to address the needs of this student population, has been invaluable in informing our sense of the range of factors that influence outcomes data.

Now that our university system, like many across the country, has fully committed to the corequisite model for developmental education ("CUNY Ends Traditional Remedial Courses"), our task as administrators shifts from developing and expanding these courses to sustaining them. This is far from a simple task in such a period of flux. As program leaders, we need to take the time to think strategically about what sustainability for Accelerated Learning Programs looks like within the complex networks that make up each institutional setting, and to create structures that provide feedback from a range of perspectives. Our experience in the "reboot" seminar revealed the importance of engaging all ALP faculty in this work, which will require targeted, ongoing professional development opportunities informed, at least in part, by assessment results and awareness of institutional priorities. The ability to quickly adapt to changing circumstances, honed during the emergency days of the pandemic, now threatens to become the permanent mode of operation for ALP instructors for the foreseeable future. The long-term success of the ALP model requires flexible and creative practices that are sustainable over time.

Notes

1. At the same time as the decision to eliminate standalone remedial courses was made, CUNY replaced separate reading and writing placement exams with a single English proficiency placement index (PI) that considers students' high school GPA, NY State English Regents exam scores, and SAT scores. Though this policy change introduced multiple measures in an attempt to more accurately predict a student's likelihood of success in first-year writing, the way a student's PI score is calculated is notably less transparent. During the pandemic, the fact that many students opted out of taking the SAT and ACT, scores which were significant to determining the PI, only muddied the waters further. In addition, CUNY removed the ability of programs to re-level students

on their own, so overall the impact has been that programs have less clarity and control over placement than previously.

2. The program began when Peter Adams gave a presentation on the model at LaGuardia in 2010. In 2017, a visit from CCBC's Susan Gabriel helped us re-establish best practices in acceleration prior to launching our curriculum revision process in 2018-2019.

3. Though the first two rounds of this work were supported by Strong Start to Finish grant funding, the rest were the result of CUNY funding devoted to assisting colleges in scaling up corequisite course offerings, as part of the mandate to eliminate standalone remedial courses. As a result of this funding, and particularly due to the opportunity to provide paid training for adjunct faculty, we were able to expand the number of sections and begin to offer the course during the evenings and short sessions.

4. For example, a presentation by Rebecca Kaminsky, Melissa Knoll and Kurt Meyer, and another by Kelsey Pepper-Ford, were influential in our thinking about this topic at that time.

5. Our writing program functions with a team of three Writing Program Administrators who are elected by the department to a three-year term. See Abdullah-Matta et al. for more on the program structure and philosophy.

6. We are not including data here from the semesters which were conducted in distance learning. At CUNY distance learning extended through much of the fall 2021 semester, when the "return to campus" was set to begin, but confusion over meeting vaccination requirements meant that most courses designated to meet partially in person did not actually do so until November.

7. We called this intervention the "English 101 Success Studios." Students signed up for weekly, hour-long sessions with a faculty member to work on either reading, writing, or studying. The sessions took place in a conference room in the department with snacks and coffee and aimed to foster a sense of connection to the writing program and to other English 101 students, which "mainstream" students do not always have the opportunity to develop in the same way that our ALP students often do.

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APPENDIX

Table 1. Comparative Pass Rate for ALP Students (Enrolled from Fall 2016-Spring 2018)

Course	Pass Rate
ENG101 (first-semester composition)	79%
ENA101 (ALP)	73.2%
ENG099 (Basic Writing)	54.6%

Table 2. Comparative Pass Rate for ALP Students in Second-Semester Composition Course (Students enrolled in source course from Fall 2015 – Fall 2017 and enrolled in ENG102 from Spring 2016 – Spring 2018)

Source Course	ENG102 Pass Rate	Average Grade
ENG101 (first-semester comp)	87.9%	2.67
ENA101 (ALP)	91.2%	2.72
ENG099 (Basic Writing)	90.8%	2.6

Table 3. Overall Pass, Unofficial Withdrawal (WU) and Failure Rates for ALP Students

Semester	C minus or better	WU	Fail
Fall 2019	73%	7%	11%
Spring 2022	57%	15%	12%
Fall 2022	60%	19%	11%

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